

SELECTIONS
FROM
MODERN ENGLISH

PROSE AND POETRY

COMPILED BY

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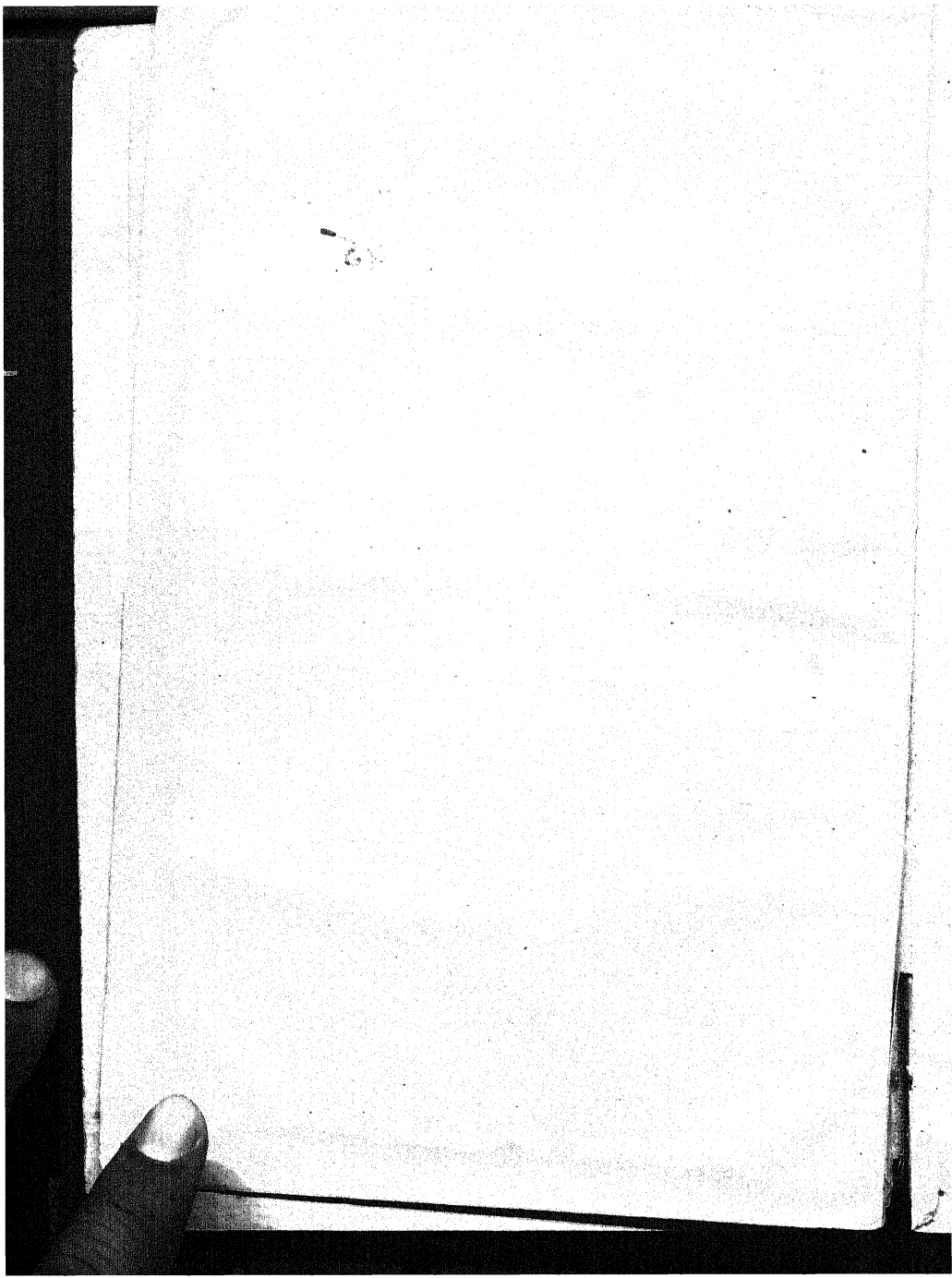
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PROSE SELECTIONS

CHARLES DICKENS

SHOWING HOW DODSON AND FOGG WERE MEN OF BUSINESS

In the ground-floor front of a dingy house, at the very furthest end of Freeman's Court, Cornhill, sat the four clerks of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg, two of His Majesty's Attorneys of the Courts of King's Bench and Common Pleas at Westminster, and solicitors of the High Court of Chancery: the aforesaid clerks catching about as favourable glimpses of Heaven's light and Heaven's sun, in the course of their daily labours, as a man might hope to do, were he placed at the bottom of a reasonably deep well; and without the opportunity of perceiving the stars in the day-time, which the latter secluded situation affords.

The clerks' office of Messrs. Dodson and Fogg was a dark, mouldy, earthy-smelling room, with a high wainscotted partition to screen the clerks from the vulgar gaze: a couple of old wooden chairs, a very loud-ticking clock, an almanack, an umbrella-stand, a row of hat pegs, and a few shelves, on which were deposited several ticketed bundles of dirty papers, some old deal boxes with paper labels, and sundry decayed stone ink bottles of various shapes and sizes. There was a glass door leading into the passage which formed the entrance to the court, and on the outer side of this glass door, Mr. Pickwick, closely followed by Sam Weller, presented himself on the Friday morning succeeding the occurrence, of which a faithful narration is given in the last chapter.

"Come in, can't you," cried a voice from behind the partition, in reply to Mr. Pickwick's gentle tap at the door. And Mr. Pickwick and Sam entered accordingly.

"Mr. Dodson or Mr. Fogg at home, Sir?" inquired Mr. Pickwick, gently, advancing, hat in hand, towards the partition.

"Mr. Dodson ain't at home, and Mr. Fogg's particularly engaged," replied the voice; and at the same time the head to which the voice belonged, with a pen behind its ear, looked over the partition, and at Mr. Pickwick.

It was a ragged head, the sandy hair of which, scrupulously parted on one side, and flattened down with pomatum, was twisted into little semi-circular tails round a flat face ornamented with a pair of small eyes, and garnished with a very dirty shirt-collar, and a rusty black stock.

"Mr. Dodson ain't at home, and Mr. Fogg's particularly engaged," said the man to whom the head belonged.

"When will Mr. Dodson be back, Sir?" inquired Mr. Pickwick.

"Can't say."

"Will it be long before Mr. Fogg is disengaged, Sir?"

"Don't know."

Here the man proceeded to mend his pen with great deliberation, while another clerk, who was mixing a Seidlitz powder, under cover of the lid of his desk laughed approvingly.

"I think I'll wait," said Mr. Pickwick. There was no reply; so Mr. Pickwick sat down unbidden, and listened to the loud ticking of the clock and the murmured conversation of the clerks.

"That was a game, wasn't it?" said one of the gentlemen, in a brown coat and brass buttons, inky drabs, and bluchers, at the conclusion of some inaudible relation of his previous evening's adventures.

"Devilish good—devilish good," said the Seidlitz-powder man.

"Tom Cummins was in the chair," said the man with the brown coat; "It was half-past four when I got to Somers Town, and then I was so precious drunk, that I couldn't find the place where the latch-key went in, and was obliged to knock up the old 'ooman. I say, I wonder what old Fogg'd say, if he knew it. I should get the sack, I s'pose—eh?"

At this humorous notion, all the clerks laughed in concert.

"There was such a game with Fogg here, this mornin'," said the man in the brown coat, "while Jack was up stairs sorting the papers, and you two were gone to the stamp-office. Fogg was down here opening the letters, when that chap as we issued the writ against at Camberwell, you know, came in—what's his name again?"

"Ramsey," said the clerk who had spoken to Mr. Pickwick.

"Ah, Ramsey—a precious seedy-looking customer. 'Well Sir,' says old Fogg, looking at him very fierce—you know his

way—"well, Sir, have you come to settle?" "Yes, I have, Sir," said Ramsey, putting his hand in his pocket, and bringing out the money, "the debt's two pound ten, and the costs three pound five, and here it is, Sir;" and he sighed like bricks, as he lugged out the money, done up in a bit of blotting-paper. Old Fogg looked first at the money, and then at him, and then he coughed in his rum way, so that I knew something was coming. "You don't know there's a declaration filed, which increases the costs materially, I suppose?" said Fogg. "You don't say that, Sir," said Ramsey, starting back; "the time was only out last night, Sir." "I do say it, though," said Fogg, "my clerk's just gone to file it. Hasn't Mr. Jackson gone to file that declaration in Bullman and Ramsey, Mr. Wicks?" Of course I said yes, and then Fogg coughed again, and looked at Ramsey. "My God!" said Ramsey; "and here have I nearly driven myself mad, scraping this money together, and all to no purpose." "None at all," said Fogg, coolly; "so you had better go back and scrape some more together, and bring it here in time." "I can't get it, by God," said Ramsey, striking the desk with his fist. "Don't bully me, Sir," said Fogg, getting into a passion on purpose. "I am not bullying you, Sir," said Ramsey. "You are," said Fogg; "get out, Sir; get out of this office, Sir, and come back, Sir, when you know how to behave yourself." Well, Ramsey tried to speak, but Fogg wouldn't let him, so he put the money in his pocket, and sneaked out. The door was scarcely shut, when old Fogg, turned round to me, with a sweet smile on his face, and drew the declaration out of his coat pocket. "Here, Wicks," says Fogg, "take a cab, and go down to the Temple as quick as you can, and file that. The costs are quite safe, for he's a steady man with a large family, at a salary of five-and-twenty shillings a week, and if he gives us a warrant of attorney, as he must in the end, I know his employers will see it paid; so we may as well get all we can out of him, Mr. Wicks; it's a Christian act to do it, Mr. Wicks, for with his large family and small income, he'll be all the better for a good lesson against getting into debt,—won't he, Mr. Wicks, won't he?"—and he smiled so goodnaturedly as he went away, that it was delightful to see him. He is a capital man of business," said Wicks, in a tone of the deepest admiration, "capital, isn't he?"

The other three cordially subscribed to this opinion, and the anecdote afforded the most unlimited satisfaction.

"Nice men these here, Sir," whispered Mr. Weller to his master ; "very nice notion of fun they has, Sir."

Mr. Pickwick nodded assent, and coughed to attract the attention of the young gentlemen behind the partition, who, having now relaxed their minds by a little conversation among themselves, condescended to take some notice of the stranger.

"I wonder whether Fogg's disengaged now ?" said Jackson.

"I'll see," said Wicks, dismounting leisurely from his stool. "What name shall I tell Mr. Fogg ?"

"Pickwick," replied the illustrious subject of these memoirs.

Mr. Jackson departed up stairs on his errand, and immediately returned with a message that Mr. Fogg would see Mr. Pickwick in five minutes ; and having delivered it, returned again to his desk.

"What did he say his name was ?" whispered Wicks.

"Pickwick," replied Jackson ; "it's the defendant in Bardell and Pickwick."

A sudden scraping of feet, mingled with the sound of suppressed laughter, was heard from behind the partition.

"They're a twiggin' you, Sir," whispered Mr. Weller.

"Twiggling me, Sam !" replied Mr. Pickwick ; "what do you mean by twiggling me ?"

Mr. Weller replied by pointing with his thumb over his shoulder : and Mr. Pickwick, on looking up, became sensible of the pleasing fact, that all the four clerks, with countenances expressive of the utmost amusement, and their heads thrust over the wooden screen, were minutely inspecting the figure and general appearance of the supposed trifle with female hearts, and disturber of female happiness. On his looking up, the row of heads suddenly disappeared, and the sound of pens travelling at a furious rate over paper, immediately succeeded.

A sudden ring at the bell which hung in the office, summoned Mr. Jackson to the apartment of Fogg, from whence he came back to say that he (Fogg) was ready to see Mr. Pickwick if he would step up stairs.

Up stairs Mr. Pickwick did step accordingly, leaving Sam Weller below. The room door of the one-pair back, bore

inscribed in legible characters the imposing words "Mr. Fogg;" and, having tapped thereat, and been desired to come in, Jackson ushered Mr. Pickwick into the presence.

"Is Mr. Dodson in?" inquired Mr. Fogg.

"Just come in, Sir," replied Jackson.

"Ask him to step here."

"Yes, Sir." Exit Jackson.

"Take a seat, Sir," said Fogg; "there is the paper, Sir: my partner will be here directly, and we can converse about this matter, Sir."

Mr. Pickwick took a seat and the paper, but, instead of reading the latter, peeped over the top of it, and took a survey of the man of business, who was an elderly, pimply-faced, vegetable-diet sort of man, in a black coat, dark mixture trousers, and small black gaiters; a kind of being who seemed to be an essential part of the desk at which he was writing, and to have about as much thought or feeling.

After a few minutes' silence, Mr. Dodson, a plump, portly, stern-looking man, with a loud voice, appeared; and the conversation commenced.

"This is Mr. Pickwick," said Fogg.

"Ah! You are the defendant, Sir, in Bardell and Pickwick?" said Dodson.

"I am, Sir," replied Mr. Pickwick.

"Well, Sir," said Dodson, "and what do you propose?"

"Ah!" said Fogg, thrusting his hands into his trousers' pockets, and throwing himself back in his chair, "what do you propose, Mr. Pickwick?"

"Hush, Fogg," said Dodson, "let me hear what Mr. Pickwick has to say."

"I came, gentlemen," replied Mr. Pickwick,—gazing placidly on the two partners,—“I came here, gentlemen to express the surprise with which I received your letter of the other day, and to inquire what grounds of action you can have against me.”

"Grounds of"—Fogg had ejaculated thus much, when he was stopped by Dodson.

"Mr. Fogg," said Dodson, "I am going to speak."

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Dodson," said Fogg.

"For the grounds of action, Sir," continued Dodson, with moral elevation in his air, "you will consult your own conscience and your own feelings. We, Sir, we, are guided entirely by the statement of our client. That statement, Sir, may be true, or it may be false; it may be credible, or it may be incredible; but, if it be true, and if it be credible, I do not hesitate to say, Sir, that our grounds of action, Sir, are strong, and not to be shaken. You may be an unfortunate man, Sir, or you may be a designing one; but if I were called upon as a jurymen upon my oath, Sir, to express an opinion of your conduct, Sir, I do not hesitate to assert that I should have but one opinion about it." Here Dodson drew himself up, with an air of offended virtue, and looked at Fogg, who thrust his hands further in his pockets, and, nodding his head sagely, said, in a tone of the fullest concurrence, "Most certainly."

"Well, Sir," said Mr. Pickwick, with considerable pain depicted in his countenance, "you will permit me to assure you, that I am a most unfortunate man, so far as this case is concerned."

"I hope you are, Sir," replied Dodson; "I trust you may be, Sir. If you are really innocent of what is laid to your charge, you are more unfortunate than I had believed any man could possibly be. What do *you* say, Mr. Fogg?"

"I say precisely what you say," replied Fogg, with a smile of incredulity.

"The writ, Sir, which commences the action," continued Dodson, "was issued regularly. Mr. Fogg, where is the *præcipe* book?"

"Here it is," said Fogg, handing over a square book, with a parchment cover.

"Here is the entry," resumed Dodson. "'Middlesex, Capias *Martha Bardell, widow, v. Samuel Pickwick*. Damages, £1500. Dodson and Fogg for the plaintiff, Aug. 28, 1827.' All regular, Sir; perfectly." And Dodson coughed and looked at Fogg, who said "Perfectly," also. And then they both looked at Mr. Pickwick.

"I am to understand, then," said Mr. Pickwick, "that it really is your intention to proceed with this action?"

"Understand, Sir!—that you certainly may," replied Dodson, with something as near a smile as his importance would allow.

"And that the damages are actually laid at fifteen hundred pounds?" said Mr. Pickwick.

"To which understanding you may add my assurance, that if we could have prevailed upon our client, they would have been laid at treble the amount, Sir:" replied Dodson.

"I believe Mrs. Bardell specially said, however," observed Fogg, glancing at Dodson, "that she would not compromise for a farthing less."

"Unquestionably," replied Dodson, sternly. For the action was only just begun; and it wouldn't have done to let Mr. Pickwick compromise it then, even if he had been so disposed.

"As you offer no terms, Sir," said Dodson, displaying a slip of parchment in his right hand, and affectionately pressing a paper copy of it, on Mr. Pickwick with his left, "I had better serve you with a copy of this writ, Sir. Here is the original Sir."

"Very well, gentlemen, very well," said Mr. Pickwick, rising in person and wrath at the same time; "you shall hear from my solicitor, gentlemen."

"We shall be very happy to do so," said Fogg, rubbing his hands.

"Very," said Dodson, opening the door.

"And before I go, gentlemen," said the excited Mr. Pickwick, turning round on the landing, "permit me to say, that of all the disgraceful and rascally proceedings—"

"Stay, Sir, stay," interposed Dodson, with great politeness. "Mr. Jackson—Mr. Wicks."

"Sir," said the two clerks, appearing at the bottom of the stairs.

"I just want you to hear what this gentleman says," replied Dodson. "Pray, go on, Sir—disgraceful and rascally proceedings, I think you said."

"I did," said Mr. Pickwick, thoroughly roused. "I said, Sir, that of all the disgraceful and rascally proceedings that ever were attempted, this is the most so. I repeat it, Sir."

"You hear that, Mr. Wicks?" said Dodson.

"You won't forget these expressions, Mr. Jackson?" said Fogg.

"Perhaps you would like to call us swindlers, Sir," said Dodson. "Pray do, Sir, if you feel disposed—now pray do, Sir."

"I do," said Mr. Pickwick. "You *are* swindlers."

"Very good," said Dodson. "You can hear down there, I hope, Mr. Wicks."

"Oh yes, Sir," said Wicks.

"You had better come up a step or two higher, if you can't," added Mr. Fogg.

"Go on, Sir; do go on. You had better call us thieves, Sir; or perhaps you would like to assault one of us. Pray do it, Sir, if you would; we will not make the smallest resistance. Pray do it, Sir."

As Fogg put himself very temptingly within the reach of Mr. Pickwick's clenched fist, there is little doubt that that gentleman would have complied with his earnest entreaty, but for the interposition of Sam, who, hearing the dispute, emerged from the office, mounted the stairs, and seized his master by the arm.

"You just come away," said Mr. Weller. "Battledore and shuttlecock's a wery good game, when you an't the shuttlecock and two lawyers the battledores, in vich case it gets too excitin' to be pleasant. Come away, Sir. If you want to ease your mind by blowing up somebody, come out into the court and blow up me; but it's rayther too expensive work to be carried on here."

And without the slightest ceremony, Mr. Weller hauled his master down the stairs, and down the court, and having safely deposited him in Cornhill, fell behind, prepared to follow whithersoever he should lead.

The Pickwick Papers

II

THACKERAY

WATERLOO

We of peaceful London city have never beheld—and please God never shall witness—such a scene of hurry and alarm as that which Brussels presented. Crowds rushed to the Namur gate, from which direction the noise proceeded, and many rode along the level *chaussée*, to be in advance of any intelligence from

the army. Each man asked his neighbour for news; and even great English lords and ladies condescended to speak to persons whom they did not know. The friends of the French went abroad, wild with excitement, and prophesying the triumph of their Emperor. The merchants closed their shops, and came out to swell the general chorus of alarm and clamour. Women rushed to the churches, and crowded the chapels, and knelt and prayed on the flags and steps. The dull sound of the cannon went on rolling, rolling. Presently carriages with travellers began to leave the town, galloping away by the Ghent barrier. The prophecies of the French partisans began to pass for facts. "He has cut the armies in two," it was said. "He is marching straight on Brussels. He will overpower the English, and be here to-night." "He will overpower the English," shrieked Isidor to his master, "and will be here to-night." The man bounded in and out from the lodgings to the street, always returning with some fresh particulars of disaster. Jos's face grew paler and paler. Alarm began to take entire possession of the stout civilian. All the champagne he drank brought no courage to him. Before sunset he was worked up to such a pitch of nervousness as gratified his friend Isidor to behold, who now counted surely upon the spoils of the owner of the laced coat.....

At some ten o'clock the clinking of a sabre might have been heard up the stair of the house where the Osbornes occupied a story in the Continental fashion. A knock might have been heard at the kitchen door; and poor Pauline, come back from church, fainted almost with terror as she opened it and saw before her her haggard hussar. He looked as pale as the midnight dragoon who came to disturb Leonora. Pauline would have screamed, but that her cry would have called her masters, and discovered her friend. She stifled her scream, then, and leading her hero into the kitchen, gave him beer, and the choice bits from the dinner, which Jos had not had the heart to taste. The hussar showed he was no ghost by the prodigious quantity of flesh and beer which he devoured—and during the mouthfuls he told his tale of disaster.

His regiment had performed prodigies of courage, and had withstood for a while the onset of the whole French army. But they were overwhelmed at last, as was the whole British army by this time. Ney destroyed each regiment as it came up. The

Belgians in vain interposed to prevent the butchery of the English. The Brunswickers were routed and had fled—their Duke was killed. It was a general *débâcle*. He sought to drown his sorrow for the defeat in floods of beer.

Isidor, who had come into the kitchen, heard the conversation, and rushed out to inform his master. "It is all over," he shrieked to Jos. "Milor Duke is a prisoner; the Duke of Brunswick is killed; the British army is in full flight; there is only one man escaped, and he is in the kitchen now—come and hear him." So Jos tottered into that apartment, where Regulus still sate on the kitchen table, and clung fast to his flagon of beer. In the best French which he could muster, and which was in sooth of a very ungrammatical sort, Jos begought the hussar to tell his tale. The disasters deepened as Regulus spoke. He was the only man of his regiment not slain on the field. He had seen the Duke of Brunswick fall, the black hussars fly, the Ecossais pounded down by the cannon.

"And the —th?" gasped Jos.

"Cut in pieces," said the hussar—upon which Pauline cried out, "O my mistress, *ma bonne petite dame*," went off fairly into hysterics, and filled the house with her screams.

Wild with terror, Mr. Sedley knew not how or where to seek for safety. He rushed from the kitchen back to the sitting room, and cast an appealing look at Amelia's door, which Mrs. O'Dowd had closed and locked in his face; but he remembered how scornfully the latter had received him, and after pausing and listening for a brief space at the door, he left it, and resolved to go into the street, for the first time that day. So, seizing a candle, he looked about for his gold-laced cap, and found it lying in its usual place, on a console-table, in the anteroom, placed before a mirror at which Jos used to coquet, always giving his side-locks a twirl, and his cap the proper cock over his eye, before he went forth to make appearance in public. Such is the force of habit, that even in the midst of his terror he began mechanically to twiddle with his hair, and arrange the cock of his hat. Then he looked amazed at the pale face in the glass before him, and especially at his mustachios, which had attained a rich growth in the course of near seven weeks, since they had come into the world. They *will* mistake me for a military man, thought he, remembering Isidor's warning as to the massacre with which all

the defeated British army was threatened; and staggering back to his bed-chamber, he began wildly pulling the bell which summoned his valet.

Isidor answered that summons. Jos had sunk in a chair—he had torn off his neckcloths, and turned down his collars, and was sitting with both his hands lifted to his throat.

"*Coupez-moi*, Isidor," shouted he; "*vite! Coupez-moi!*"

Isidor thought for a moment he had gone mad, and that he wished his valet to cut his throat.

"*Les moustaches*," gasped Jos; "*les moustaches—coupy, rasy, vite!*"—his French was of this sort—voluble, as we have said, but not remarkable for grammar.

Isidor swept off the mustachios in no time with the razor, and heard with inexpressible delight his master's orders that he should fetch a hat and a plain coat. "*Ne porty ploo—habit militair—bonny—donny a voo, prennny dehors*"—were Jos's words: the coat and cap were at last his property.

This gift being made, Jos selected a plain black coat and waist-coat from his stock, and put on a large white neckcloth and a plain beaver. If he could have got a shovel-hat he would have worn it. As it was, you would have fancied he was a flourishing, large parson of the Church of England.

"*Venny maintenong*," he continued, "*sweevy—ally—party—dong la roo*" And so having said, he plunged swiftly down the stairs of the house, and passed into the street.....

[Rebecca sells her horses to the frightened Jos Sedley at an enormous profit.]

By the time Jos's bargain with Rebecca was completed, and his horses had been visited and examined, it was almost morning once more. But though midnight was long passed, there was no rest for the city; the people were up, the lights in the houses flamed, crowds were still about the doors, and the streets were busy. Rumours of various natures went still from mouth to mouth: one report averred that the Prussians had been utterly defeated; another that it was the English who had been attacked and conquered: a third that the latter had held their ground. This last rumour gradually got strength. No Frenchmen had made their appearance. Stragglers had come in from the army bringing reports more and more favourable: at last an aide-de-camp actually reached Brussels with dispatches for the Commandant of the place, who placarded presently

through the town an official announcement of the success of the allies at Quatre Bras, and the entire repulse of the French under Ney after a six hours' battle. The aide-de-camp must have arrived some time while Jos and Rebecca were making their bargain together, or the latter was inspecting his purchase. When he reached his own hotel, he found a score of its numerous inhabitants on the threshold discoursing of the news; there was no doubt as to its truth. And he went up to communicate it to the ladies under his charge. He did not think it was necessary to tell them how he had intended to take leave of them, how he had bought horses, and what a price he had paid for them.

But success or defeat was a minor matter to them, who had only thought for the safety of those they loved. Amelia, at the news of the victory, became still more agitated even than before. She was for going that moment to the army. She besought her brother with tears to conduct her thither. Her doubts and terrors reached their paroxysm; and the poor girl, who for many hours had been plunged into stupor, raved and ran hither and thither in hysteric insanity—a piteous sight. No man writhing in pain on the hard-fought field fifteen miles off, where lay, after their struggles, so many of the brave—no man suffered more keenly than this poor harmless victim of the war. Jos could not bear the sight of her pain. He left his sister in the charge of her stouter female companion, and descended once more to the threshold of the hotel, where everybody still lingered, and talked, and waited for more news.

It grew to be broad daylight as they stood here, and fresh news began to arrive from the war, brought by men who had been actors in the scene. Wagons and long country carts laden with wounded came rolling into the town; ghastly groans came from within them, and haggard faces looked up sadly from out of the straw. Jos Sedley was looking at one of these carriages with a painful curiosity—the moans of the people within were frightful—the wearied horses could hardly pull the cart. "Stop! Stop!" a feeble voice cried from the straw, and the carriage stopped opposite Mr. Sedley's hotel.

"It is George! I know it is!" cried Amelia, rushing in a moment to the balcony, with a pallid face and loose flowing hair. It was not George, however, but it was the next best thing—it was news of him. It was poor Tom Stubble, who had

marched out of Brussels so gallantly twenty-four hours before, bearing the colours of the regiment, which he had defended very gallantly upon the field. A French lancer had speared the young ensign in the leg, who fell, still bravely holding to his flag. At the conclusion of the engagement, a place had been found for the poor boy in a cart, and he had been brought back to Brussels.

"Mr. Sedley, Mr. Sedley!" cried the boy faintly, and Jos came up almost frightened at the appeal. He had not at first distinguished who it was that called him.

Little Tom Stubble held out his hot and feeble hand. "I'm to be taken in here," he said. "Osborne—and—and Dobbin said I was; and you are to give the man two napoleons: my mother will pay you." This young fellow's thoughts during the long feverish hours passed in the cart, had been wandering to his father's parsonage which he had quitted only a few months before, and he had sometimes forgotten his pain in that delirium.

The hotel was large, and the people kind, and all the inmates of the cart were taken in and placed on various couches. The young ensign was conveyed upstairs to Osborne's quarters. Amelia and the Major's wife had rushed down to him, when the latter had recognized him from the balcony. You may fancy the feelings of these women when they were told that the day was over, and both their husbands were safe; in what mute rapture Amelia fell on her good friend's neck, and embraced her; in what a grateful passion of prayer she fell on her knees, and thanked the Power which saved her husband.

Our young lady, in her fevered and nervous condition, could have had no more salutary medicine prescribed for her by any physician than that which chance put in her way. She and Mrs. O'Dowd watched incessantly by the wounded lad, whose pains were very severe, and in the duty thus forced upon her, Amelia had not time to brood over her personal anxieties, or to give herself up to her own fears and forebodings after her wont. The young patient told in his simple fashion the events of the day, and the actions of our friends of the gallant—th. They had suffered severely. They had lost very many officers and men. The Major's horse had been shot under him as the regiment charged, and they all thought that O'Dowd was gone, and that Dobbin had got his majority, until on their return from the charge to their old ground, the Major was discovered

seated on Pyramus's carcase, refreshing himself from a case-bottle. It was Captain Osborne that cut down the French lancer who had speared the ensign. Amelia turned so pale at the notion, that Mrs. O'Dowd stopped the young ensign in his story. And it was Captain Dobbin who at the end of the day, though wounded himself, took up the lad in his arms and carried him to the surgeon, and thence to the cart which was to bring him back to Brussels. And it was he who promised the driver two louis if he would make his way to Mr. Sedley's hotel in the city ; and tell Mrs. Captain Osborne that the action was over, and that her husband was unhurt and well.

"Indeed, but he has a good heart that William Dobbin," Mrs. O'Dowd said, "though he is always laughing at me."

Young Stubble vowed there was not such another officer in the army, and never ceased his praises of the senior captain, his modesty, his kindness, and his admirable coolness in the field. To these parts of the conversation, Amelia lent a very *distant* distracted attention ; it was only when George was spoken of that she listened, and when he was not mentioned she thought about him.

convinced
anxiety
crushed
attack
In tending her patient, and in thinking of the wonderful escapes of the day before, her second day passed away not too slowly with Amelia. There was only one man in the army for her : and as long as he was well, it must be owned that its movements interested her little. All the reports which Jos brought from the streets fell very vaguely on her ears ; though they were sufficient to give that timorous gentleman, and many other people then in Brussels, every *anxiety* *crushed* *attack* *disquiet*. The French had been repulsed certainly, but it was after a severe and doubtful struggle, and with only a division of the French army. The Emperor, with the main body, was away at Ligny, where he had utterly annihilated the Prussians, and was now free to bring his whole force to bear upon the allies. The Duke of Wellington was retreating upon the capital, and a great battle must be fought under its walls probably, of which the chances were more than doubtful. The Duke of Wellington had but twenty thousand British troops on whom he could rely, for the Germans were raw militia, the Belgians disaffected ; and with this handful his Grace had to resist a hundred and fifty thousand men that had broken into Belgium under Napoleon. Under Napoleon ! What warrior was there,

however famous and skilful, that could fight at odds with him?

Jos thought of all these things, and trembled. So did all the rest of Brussels—where people felt that the fight of the day before was but the prelude to the greater combat which was imminent. One of the armies opposed to the Emperor was scattered to the winds already. The few English that could be brought to resist him would perish at their posts, and the conqueror would pass over their bodies into the city. Woe be to those whom he found there! Addresses were prepared, public functionaries assembled and debated secretly, apartments were got ready, and tricoloured banners and triumphal emblems manufactured, to welcome the arrival of His Majesty the Emperor and King.....

The next day was a Sunday. And Mrs. Major O'Dowd had the satisfaction of seeing both her patients refreshed in health and spirits by some rest which they had taken during the night. She herself had slept in a great chair in Amelia's room, ready to wait upon her poor friend or the ensign, should either need her nursing. When morning came, this robust woman went back to the house where she and her Major had their billet; and here performed an elaborate and splendid toilette befitting the day. And it is very possible that whilst alone in that chamber, which her husband had inhabited, and where his cap still lay on the pillow, and his cane stood in the corner, one prayer at least was sent up to Heaven for the welfare of the brave soldier, Michael O'Dowd.

When she returned she brought her prayer-book with her, and her uncle the Dean's famous book of sermons, out of which she never failed to read every Sabbath; not understanding all, haply, not pronouncing many of the words aright, which were long and abstruse—for the Dean was a learned man, and loved long Latin words—but with great gravity, vast emphasis, and with tolerable correctness in the main. How often has my Mick listened to these sermons, she thought, and me reading in the cabin of a calm! She proposed to resume this exercise on the present day, with Amelia and the wounded ensign for a congregation. The same service was read on that day in twenty thousand churches at the same hour; and millions of British men and women, on their knees, implored protection of the Father of all.

They did not hear the noise which disturbed our little congregation at Brussels. Much louder than that which had interrupted them two days previously, as Mrs. O'Dowd was reading the service in her best voice, the cannon of Waterloo began to roar.

When Jos heard that dreadful sound, he made up his mind that he would bear this perpetual recurrence of terrors no longer, and would fly at once. He rushed into the sick man's room, where our three friends had paused in their prayers, and further interrupted them by a passionate appeal to Amelia.

"I can't stand it any more, Emmy," he said; "I won't stand it; and you must come with me. I have bought a horse for you—never mind at what price—and you must dress and come with me, and ride behind Isidor."

"God forgive me, Mr. Sedley! but you are no better than a coward," Mrs. O'Dowd said, laying down the book.

"I say come, Amelia," the civilian went on; "never mind what she says; why are we to stop here and be butchered by the Frenchmen?"

"You forget the —th, my boy," said the little Stubble, the wounded hero, from his bed—"and—and you won't leave me, will you, Mrs. O'Dowd?"

"No, my dear fellow," said she, going up and kissing the boy. "No harm shall come to you while I stand by. I don't budge till I get the word from Mick. A pretty figure I'd be, wouldn't I, stuck behind that chap on a pillion?"

This image caused the young patient to burst out laughing in his bed, and even made Amelia smile. "I don't ask her," Jos shouted out—"I don't ask that—that Irishwoman, but you, Amelia; once for all, will you come?"

"Without my husband, Joseph?" Amelia said, with a look of wonder, and gave her hand to the Major's wife. Jos's patience was exhausted.

"Good-bye, then," he said, shaking his fist in a rage, and slamming the door by which he retreated. And this time he really gave his order for march, and mounted in the courtyard. Mrs. O'Dowd heard the clattering hoofs of the horses as they issued from the gate; and looking on, made many scornful remarks on poor Joseph as he rode down the street with Isidor after him in the laced cap. The horses, which had not been

exercised for some days, were lively, and sprang about the street. Jos, a clumsy and timid horseman, did not look to advantage in the saddle. "Look at him, Amelia dear, driving into the parlour window. Such a bull in a china-shop *I* never saw." And presently the pair of riders disappeared at a canter down the street leading in the direction of the Ghent road, Mrs. O'Dowd pursuing them with a fire of sarcasm so long as they were in sight.

All that day from morning until past sunset, the cannon never ceased to roar. It was dark when the cannonading stopped all of a sudden.

All of us have read of what occurred during that interval. The tale is in every Englishman's mouth; and you and I, who were children when the great battle was won and lost, are never tired of hearing and recounting the history of that famous action. Its remembrance rankles still in the bosoms of millions of the countrymen of those brave men who lost the day. They pant for an opportunity of revenging that humiliation; and if a contest, ending in a victory on their part, should ensue, elating them in their turn, and leaving its cursed legacy of hatred and rage behind to us, there is no end to the so-called glory and shame, and to the alternations of successful and unsuccessful murder, in which two high-spirited nations might engage. Centuries hence, we Frenchmen and Englishmen might be boasting and killing each other still, carrying out bravely the Devil's code of honour.

All our friends took their share and fought like men in the great field. All day long, whilst the women were praying ten miles away, the lines of the dauntless English infantry were receiving and repelling the furious charges of the French horsemen. Guns which were heard at Brussels were ploughing up their ranks, and comrades falling, and the resolute survivors closing in. Towards evening, the attack of the French, repeated and resisted so bravely, slackened in its fury. They had other foes besides the British to engage, or were preparing for a final onset. It came at last: the columns of the Imperial Guard marched up the hill of Saint Jean, at length and at once to sweep the English from the height which they had maintained all day, and spite of all: unscared by the thunder of the artillery, which hurled death from the English line, the dark rolling column pressed on and up the hill. It seemed almost to crest the

eminence, when it began to wave and falter. Then it stopped, still facing the shot. Then at last the English troops rushed from the post from which no enemy had been able to dislodge them, and the Guard turned and fled.

No more firing was heard at Brussels—the pursuit rolled miles away. Darkness came down on the field and city; and Amelia was praying for George, who was lying on his face, dead, with a bullet through his heart.

Vanity Fair

III

RUSKIN

MY EDUCATION

I am, and my father was before me, a violent Tory of the old school (Walter Scott's school, that is to say, and Homer's). I name these two out of the numberless great Tory writers, because they were my own two masters. I had Walter Scott's novels, and the *Iliad* (Pope's translation,) for my only reading when I was a child, on week-days: on Sundays this effect was tempered by *Robinson Crusoe* and the *Pilgrim's Progress*; my mother having it deeply in her heart to make an evangelical clergyman of me. Fortunately, I had an aunt more evangelical than my mother; and my aunt gave me cold mutton for Sunday's dinner, which—as I much preferred it hot—greatly diminished the influence of the *Pilgrim's Progress*; and the end of the matter was, that I got all the noble imaginative teaching of Defoe and Bunyan, and yet am not an evangelical clergyman.

I had, however, still better teaching than theirs, and that compulsorily, and every day of the week. (Have patience with me in this egotism; it is necessary for many reasons that you should know what influences have brought me into the temper in which I write to you.)

Walter Scott and Pope's *Homer* were reading of my own election, but my mother forced me, by steady daily toil, to learn long chapters of the Bible by heart, as well as to read it every syllable through, aloud, hard names and all, from Genesis to the Apocalypse, about once a year; and to that discipline—patient, accurate, and resolute—I owe not only a knowledge of the book, which I find occasionally serviceable, but much of

at times

my general power of taking pains, and the best part of my taste in literature. From Walter Scott's novels I might easily, as I grew older, have fallen to other people's novels; and Pope might, perhaps, have led me to take Johnson's English, or Gibbon's, as types of language; but, once knowing the 32nd of Deuteronomy, the 119th Psalm, the 15th of 1st Corinthians, the Sermon on the Mount, and most of the Apocalypse, every syllable by heart, and having always a way of thinking with myself what words meant, it was not possible for me, even in the foolishness of youth, to write entirely superficial or formal English, and the affectation to write like Hooker and George Herbert, which I now with shame confess of having long tried, was the most innocent I could have fallen into.]

From my own masters, then, Scott and Homer, I learned the Toryism which my best after-thought has only served to confirm.

[That is to say a most sincere love of kings, and dislike of everybody who attempted to disobey them. Only, both by Homer and Scott, I was taught strange ideas about kings, which I find, for the present, much obsolete; for, I perceive that both the author of the *Iliad* and the author of *Waverley* made their kings, or king-loving persons, do harder work than anybody else. Tydides or Idomeneus always killed twenty Trojans to other people's one, and Redgauntlet speared more salmon than any of the Solway fishermen, and—which was particularly a subject of admiration to me,—I observed that they not only did more, but in proportion to their doings got less, than other people—nay, that the best of them were even ready to govern for nothing, and let their followers divide any quantity of spoil or profit. Of late it has seemed to me that the idea of a king has become exactly the contrary of this, and that it has been supposed the duty of superior persons generally to do less, and to get more than anybody else; so that it was, perhaps, quite as well that in those early days my contemplation of existent kingship was a very distant one, and my childish eyes wholly unacquainted with the splendour of courts.]

The aunt who gave me cold mutton on Sundays was my father's sister; she lived at Bridge-end, in the town of Perth, and had a garden full of gooseberry-bushes, sloping down to the Tay, with a door opening to the water, which ran past it clear-brown over the pebbles three or four feet deep; an infinite thing for a child to look down into.

My father began business as a wine-merchant, with no capital, and a considerable amount of debts bequeathed him by my grand-father. He accepted the bequest, and paid them all before he began to lay by anything for himself, for which his best friends called him a fool, and I, without expressing any opinion as to his wisdom, which I knew in such matters to be at least equal to mine, have written on the granite slab over his grave that he was "an entirely honest merchant." As days went on he was able to take a house in Hunter Street, Brunswick Square, No. 54 (the windows of it, fortunately for me, commanded a view of a marvellous iron post, out of which the water-carts were filled through beautiful little trap-doors, by pipes like boa-constrictors; and I was never weary of contemplating that mystery, and the delicious dripping consequent): and as years went on, and I came to be four or five years old, he could command a post-chaise and pair for two months in the summer, by help of which, with my mother and me, he went the round of his country customers (who liked to see the principal of the house his own traveller); so that, at a jog-trot pace, and through the panoramic opening of the four windows of a post-chaise, made more panoramic still to me because my seat was a little bracket in front (for we used to hire the chaise regularly for two months out of Long Acre, and so could have it bracketed and pocketed as we liked), I saw all the high-roads, and most of the cross ones, of England and Wales, and great part of lowland Scotland, as far as Perth, where every other year we spent the whole summer; and I used to read the *Abbot* at Kinross, and the *Monastery* in Glen Farg, which I confused with "Glendearg," and thought that the White Lady had as certainly lived by the streamlet in that glen of the Ochils, as the Queen of Scots in the island of Loch Leven.

It happened also, which was the real cause of the bias of my after life, that my father had a rare love of pictures. I use the word "rare" advisedly, having never met with another instance of so innate a faculty for the discernment of true art, up to the point possible without actual practice. Accordingly, wherever there was a gallery to be seen, we stopped at the nearest town for the night; and in reverentest manner I thus saw nearly all the noblemen's houses in England; not indeed myself at that age caring for the pictures, but much for castles and ruins, feeling more and more, [as I grew older, the healthy delight of

uncovetous admiration, and perceiving, as soon as I could perceive any political truth at all, that it was probably much happier to live in a small house, and have Warwick Castle to be astonished at, than to live in Warwick Castle, and have nothing to be astonished at; but that, at all events, it would not make Brunswick Square in the least more pleasantly habitable, to pull Warwick Castle down. And, at this day, though I have kind invitations enough to visit America, I could not, even for a couple of months, live in a country so miserable as to possess no castles.

Nevertheless, having formed my notion of Kinghood chiefly from the FitzJames of the *Lady of the Lake*, and of noblesse from the Douglas there, and the Douglas in *Marmion*, a painful wonder soon arose in my child-mind, why the castles should now be always empty. Tantallon was there; but no Archibald of Angus:—Stirling, but no Knight of Snowdown. The galleries and gardens of England were beautiful to see—but his Lordship and her Ladyship were always in town, said the housekeepers and gardeners. Deep yearning took hold of me for a kind of “Restoration,” which I began slowly to feel that Charles the Second had not altogether effected, though I always wore a gilded oak-apple very reverently in my button-hole on the 29th of May. It seemed to me that Charles the Second’s Restoration had been, as compared with the Restoration I wanted, much as that gilded oak-apple to a real apple. And as I grew older, the desire for red pippins instead of brown ones, and Living Kings instead of dead ones, appeared to me rational as well as romantic; and gradually it has become the main purpose of my life to grow pippins, and its chief hope, to see Kings.

Fors Clavigera

IV

RICHARD JEFFERIES

PLAYING AT SAVAGES

Next morning as they went through the meadow, where the dew still lingered in the shade, on the way to the bathing-place, taking Pan with them this time, they hung about the path picking clover-heads and sucking the petals, pulling them out and putting the lesser ends in their lips, looking at the white and pink

bramble flowers, noting where the young nuts began to show, pulling down the woodbine, and doing everything but hasten on to their work of swimming. They stopped at the gate by the New Sea, over whose smooth surface slight breaths of mist were curling, and stood kicking the ground and the stones as flighty horses paw.

"We ought to be something," said Mark discontentedly.

"Of course we ought," said Bevis. "Things are very stupid unless you are something."

"Lions and tigers," said Mark, growling, and showing his teeth.

"Pooh !"

"Shipwrecked people on an island."

"Fiddle ! They have plenty to do and are always happy, and we are not."

"No ; very unhappy. Let's try escaping—prisoners running away."

"Hum ! Hateful !"

"Everything's hateful."

"So it is."

"This is a very stupid sea."

"There's nothing in it."

"Nothing anywhere."

"Let's be hermits."

"There's always only one hermit."

"Well, you live that side" (pointing across), "and I'll live this."

"Hermits eat pulse and drink water."

"What's pulse ?"

"I suppose it's barley water."

"Horrid."

"Awful."

"You say what we shall be then."

"Pan, you old donk," said Bevis, rolling Pan over with his foot. Lazy Pan lay on his back, and let Bevis bend his ribs with his foot...

Pan closed his idle old eyes, and grunted with delight as Bevis rubbed his ribs with his foot. Bevis put his hands in his pockets.

and sighed deeply. The sun looked down on these sons of care, and all the morning beamed.

"Savages!" shouted Mark, kicking the gate to with a slam that startled Pan up. "Savages, of course!"

"Why?"

"They swim, donk: don't they? They're always in the water, and they have catamarans and ride the waves and dance on the shore, and blow shells—"

"Trumpets?"

"Yes."

"Canoes?"

"Yes."

"No clothes?"

"No."

"All jolly?"

"Everything."

"Hurrah!"

Away they ran towards the bathing-place to be savages, but Mark stopped suddenly, and asked what sort they were? They decided that they were the South Sea sort, and raced on again, Pan keeping pace with a kind of shamble; he was too idle to run properly. They dashed into the water, each with a wood-pigeon's feather, which they had found under the sycamore-trees above the quarry, stuck in his hair. At the first dive the feathers floated away. Upon the other side of the rails there was a large aspen-tree whose lowest bough reached out over the water, which was shallow there.

Though they made such a splashing, when Bevis looked over the railings a moment, he saw some little roach moving to and fro under the bough. The wavelets from his splashing rolled on to the sandy shore, rippling under the aspen. As he looked, a fly fell on its back out of the tree, and struggled in vain to get up. Bevis climbed over the rails, picked an aspen leaf, and put it under the fly, which thus on a raft, and tossed up and down as Mark dived, was floated slowly by the undulations to the strand. As he got over the rails a kingfisher shot out from the mouth of the Nile opposite, and crossed aslant the gulf, whistling as he flew.

name of the streamlet

in slanting direction.

"Look!" said Mark. "Don't you know that's a 'sign.' Savages read 'signs,' and those birds mean that there are heaps of fish." *interpret*

"Yes, but we ought to have a proper language."

"Kalabala-blong!" said Mark. *plunge*

"Hududu-blow-fluz!" replied Bevis, taking a header from the top of the rail on which he had been sitting, and on which he just contrived to balance himself a moment without falling backwards. *manage*

"Umplumum!" he shouted, coming up again.

"Ikiklikah," and Mark disappeared.

"Noklikah," said Bevis, giving him a shove under as he came up to breathe.

"That's not fair," said Mark, scrambling up.

Bevis was swimming, and Mark seized his feet. More splashing and shouting, and the rocks resound. The echo of their voices returned from the quarry and high bank under the firs.

They raced presently down to the elms along the sweet soft turf, sprinkling the dry grass with the sparkling drops from their limbs, and the sunlight shone on their white shoulders. The wind blew and stroked their gleaming backs. They rolled and tumbled on the grass, and the earth was under them. From the water to the sun and the wind and the grass.

passion
drift
passion
They played round the huge sycamore trunks above the quarry, and the massive boughs stretched over—from a distance they would have seemed mere specks beneath the immense trees. They raced across to a round hollow in the field and sat down at the bottom, so that they could see nothing but the sky overhead, and the clouds drifting. They lay at full length, and for a moment were still and silent; the sunbeam and the wind, the soft touch of the grass, the gliding cloud, the eye-loved blue gave them the delicious sense of growing strong in drowsy luxury. *happy*

more
Then with a shout, renewed, they ran, and Pan, who had been waiting by their clothes, was startled into a bark of excitement at their sudden onslaught. As they went homewards they walked round to the little sheltered bay where the boats were kept, to look at the blue boat and measure for the mast. It was beside the punt, half drawn up on the sand, and fastened to a willow root. She was an ill-built craft with a straight

gunwale, so that when afloat she seemed lower at stem and stern than abeam, as if she would thrust her nose into a wave instead of riding it. The planks were thick and heavy and looked as if they had not been bent enough to form the true buoyant curve.....

Still she was a boat, with keel and curve, and like lovers they saw no defect. Bevis looked at the hole in the seat or thwart, where the mast would have to be stepped, and measured it (not having a rule with him) by cutting a twig just to the length of the diameter. Mark examined the rudder and found that the lines were rotten, having hung dangling over the stern in the water for so long. Next they stepped her length, stepping on the sand outside, to decide on the height of the mast, and where the ropes were to be fastened, for they meant to have some standing rigging.

At home afterwards in the shed, while Bevis shaved the fir-pole for the mast, Mark was set to carve the leaping-pole, for the South Sea savages have everything carved. He could hardly cut the hard dried bark of the ash, which had shrunk on and become like wood. He made a spiral notch round it, and then searched till he found his old spear, which had to be ornamented and altered into a bone harpoon. A bone from the kitchen was sawn off while in the vice, and then half through two inches from the largest end. Tapping a broad chisel gently, Mark split the bone down to the sawn part, and then gradually filed it sharp. He also filed three barbs to it, and then fitted the staff of the spear into the hollow end. While he was engraving lines and rings on the spear with his pocket-knife, the dinner interrupted his work.

Bevis, wearying of the mast, got some flints, and hammered them to split off flakes for arrowheads, but though he bruised his fingers, he could not chip the splinters into shape. The fracture always ran too far, or not far enough. John Young, the labourer, came by as he was doing this sitting on the stool in the shed, and watched him.....

Bevis battered his flints till he was tired; then he took up the last and hurled it away in a rage with all his might. The flint whirled over and over and hummed along the ground till it struck a small sarsen or boulder by the wood-pile, put there as a spur-stone to force the careless carters to drive straight. Then it flew into splinters with the jerk of the stoppage.

"Here's a sharp 'un," said John Young, picking up a flake, "and here's another."

Altogether there were three pointed flakes which Bevis thought would do. Mark had to bring some reeds next day from the place where they grew, half a mile below his house in a by-water of the brook. They were green, but Bevis could not wait to dry them. He cut them off a little above the knot or joint, split the part above, and put the flint flake in, and bound it round and round with horse-hair from the carter's store in the stable. But when they were finished, they were not shot off, lest they should break; they were carried indoors into the room upstairs where there was a bench, and which they made their armoury.

They made four or five darts next of deal shaved to the thickness of a thin walking-stick, and not quite so long. One end was split in four—once down and across that—and two pieces of cardboard doubled up thrust in, answering the purpose of feathering. There was a slight notch two-thirds up the shaft, and the way was to twist a piece of twine round it there, crossed over a knot so as just to hold, the other end of the twine firmly coiled about the wrist, so that in throwing the string was taut and the point of the dart between the fingers. Hurling it, the string imparted a second force, and the dart, twirling like an arrow, flew fifty or sixty yards.

Slings they made with a square of leather from the sides of old shoes, a small hole cut out in the centre that the stone might not slip, but these they could never do much with, except hurl pebbles from the rick-yard, rattling up into the boughs of the oak, on the other side of the field. The real arrows to shoot with—not the reed arrows to look at—were tipped with iron nails filed to a sharp point. They had much trouble in feathering them; they had plenty of goose-feathers (saved from the Christmas plucking), but to glue them on properly was not easy.....

"Now we are quite savages," said Bevis, one evening, as they sat up in the bench-room, and the sun went down red and fiery, opposite the little window, filling the room with a red glow and gleaming on their faces. It put a touch of colour on the pears, which were growing large, just outside the window, as if they were ripe towards the sunset. The boomerang on the wall was lit up with the light; so was a parcel of canvas, on the floor,

which they had bought at Latten town, for the sails of their ship.

There was an oyster barrel under the bench, which was to contain the fresh water for their voyage, and there had been much discussion as to how they were to put a new head to it.

"We ought to see ourselves on the shore with spears and things when we are sailing round," said Mark.

"So as not to be able to land for fear."

"Poisoned arrows," said Mark. "I say, how stupid! we have not got any poison."

"No more we have. We must get a lot of poison."

"Curious plants nobody knows anything about but us."

"Nobody ever heard of them."

"And dip our arrows and spears in the juice."

"No one ever gets well after being shot with them."

"If the wind blows hard ashore and there are no harbours it will be awful with the savages all along waiting for us."

"We shall see them dancing and shouting with bows and throw-sticks, and yelling."

"That's you and me."

"Of course. And very likely if the wind is very hard we shall have to let down the sails, and fling out an anchor and stay till the gale goes down."

"The anchor may drag."

"Then we shall crash on the rocks."

"And swim ashore."

"You can't. There's the breakers and the savages behind them. I shall stop on the wreck, and the sun will go down."

"Red like that," pointing out of window.

"And it will blow harder still."

"Black as pitch."

"Horrible."

"No help."

"Fire a gun."

"Pooh!"

"Make a raft."

"The clouds are sure to break, or something."

"I say," said Bevis, "won't all these things"—pointing to the weapons—"do first-rate for our war?" *excellent*

"Capital. There will be arrows sticking up everywhere all over the battle-field."

"Broken lances and horses without riders."

"Dints in the ground."

"Knights with their backs against trees and heaps of soldiers chopping at them."

"Flashing swords! the ground will shake when we charge."

"Trumpets!"

"Groans!"

"Grass all red!"

"Blood-red sun like that!" The disc growing larger as it neared the horizon shone vast through some distant elms.

"Flocks of crows."

"Heaps of white bones."

"And we will take the shovels and make a tumulus by the shore."

The red glow on the wall slowly dimmed, the colour left the pear, and the song of a thrush came from the orchard.

"I want to make some magic," said Bevis, after a pause.

"The thing is to make a wand."

spirit "Genii are best," said Mark. "They do anything you tell them."

"There ought to be a black book telling you how to do it somewhere," said Bevis; "but I've looked through the bookcase and there's nothing."

"Are you sure you have quite looked through?"

"I'll try again," said Bevis. "There's a lot of books, but never anything that you want."

"I know," said Mark suddenly. "There's the bugle in the old cupboard—that will do for the war."

"So it will; I forgot it."

"And a flag."

"No; we must have eagles on a stick."

Knock! They jumped; Polly had hit the ceiling underneath with the handle of a broom.

"Supper."

When they went to bathe next morning, Bevis took with him his bow and arrows, intending to shoot a pike. As they walked beside the shore they often saw jacks basking in the sun at the surface of the water, and only a few yards distant. He had fastened a long thin string one end to the arrow and the other to the bow, so that he might draw the arrow back to him with the fish on as the savages do. Mark brought his bone-headed harpoon to try and spear something, and between them they also carried a plank, which was to be used as a catamaran.

A paddle they had made was tied to it for convenience, that their hands might not be too full. Mark went first with one end of the plank on his shoulder, and Bevis followed with the other on his, and as they had to hold it on edge it rather cut them. Coming near some weeds where they had seen a jack the day before, they put the catamaran down, and Bevis crept quietly forward. The jack was not there, but motioning to Mark to stand still, Bevis went on to where the first railings stretched out into the water.

There he saw a jack about two pounds' weight basking within an inch of the surface, and aslant to him. He lifted his bow before he went near, shook out the string that it might slip easily like the coil of a harpoon, fitted the arrow, and holding it almost up, stole closer. He knew if he pulled the bow in the usual manner the sudden motion of his arms would send the jack away in an instant. With the bow already in position, he got within six yards of the fish, which, quite still, did not seem to see anything, but to sleep with eyes wide open in the sun. The shaft flew, and like another arrow the jack darted aslant into deep water.

Bevis drew back his arrow with the string, not altogether disappointed, for it had struck the water very near if not exactly at the place the fish had occupied. But he thought the string impeded the shaft, and took it off for another trial. Mark would not stay behind; he insisted upon seeing the shooting, so leaving the catamaran on the grass, they moved gently along the shore. After a while they found another jack, this time much larger, and not less than four pounds' weight, stationary in a tiny bay, or curve of the land. He was lying parallel to the shore, but deeper than the first, perhaps six inches beneath the surface. Mark stood where he could see the dark line of the fish, while

Bevis, with the bow lifted and arrow half-drawn, took one, two, three, and almost another step forward.

Aiming steadily at the jack's broad side, just behind the front fins, where the fish was widest, Bevis grasped his bow firm to keep it from the least wavering (for it is the left hand that shoots), drew his arrow, and let go. So swift was the shaft, unimpeded, and drawn too this time almost to the head, in traversing the short distance between, that the jack, quick as he was, could not of himself have escaped. Bevis saw the arrow enter the water, and, as it seemed to him, strike the fish. It did indeed strike the image of the fish, but the real jack slipped beneath it.

Bevis looked and looked, he was so certain he had hit it, and so he had hit the mark he aimed at, which was the refraction, but the fish was unhurt. It was explained to him afterwards that the fish appears higher in the water than it actually is, and that to have hit it he should have aimed two inches underneath, and he proved the truth of it by trying to touch things in the water with a long stick. The arrow glanced after going two feet or so deep, and performed a curve in the water exactly opposite to that it would have traced in the air. In the air it would have curved over, in the water it curved under, and came up to the surface not very far out; the water checked it so. Bevis fastened the string again to another arrow, and shot it out over the first, so that it caught and held it, and he drew them both back.

They fetched the catamaran, and went on till they came to the point where there was a wall of stones rudely put together to shield the land from the full shock of the waves, when the west wind rolled them heavily from the Indian Ocean and the Golden Sea. Putting the plank down again, Mark went forward with his harpoon, for he knew that shoals of fish often played in the water when it was still, just beneath this rocky wall. As he expected, they were there this morning, for the most part roach, but a few perch. He knelt and crept out on all fours to the edge of the wall, leaving his hat on the sward. Looking over, he could see to the stony bottom, and as there was not a ripple, he could see distinctly.

He put his harpoon gently, without a splash, into the sunlit water, and let it sink slowly in among the shoal. The roach swam aside a yard or so from it, but showed no more fear than

that it should not touch them. Mark kept his harpoon still till a larger roach came slowly by within eighteen inches of the point, when he jerked it at the fish. It passed six inches behind his tail, and though Mark tried again and again, thrusting quickly, he could not strike them with his single point. To throw it like a dart he knew was useless, they were too deep down, nor could he hit so small an object in motion. He could not do it, but some days afterwards he struck a small tench in the brook, and got him out. The tench was still, so that he could put the head of his harpoon almost on it.

They marched on, and presently launched the catamaran. It would only support one at a time astride and half in the water, but it was a capital thing. Sitting on it, Bevis paddled along the shore nearly to the rocky wall and back, but he did not forget his promise, and was not out of his depth; he could see the stones at the bottom all the time. Mark tried to stand on the plank, but one edge would go down and pitch him off. He next tried to lie on it on his back, and succeeded so long as he let his legs dangle over each side, and so balanced it. Then they stood away, and swam to it as if it had been the last plank of a wreck.

"Look!" said Mark, after they had done this several times. He was holding the plank at arm's length with his limbs floating. "Look!"

"I see. What is it?"

"This is the way. We ought to have held the jumping-pole like this. This is the way to hold an oar and swim."

"So it is," said Bevis, "of course, that's it; we'll have the punt, and try with a scull."

Held at arm's length, almost anything will keep a swimmer afloat; but if he puts it under his arm or chest, it takes a good-sized spar. Splashing about, presently the plank, forgotten for the moment, slipped away, and, impelled by the waves they made, floated into deep water.

"I'm sure I could swim to it," said Bevis, and he was inclined to try.

"We promised not," said Mark.

"You stupe—I know that; but if there's a plank, that's not dangerous then." "Stupe" was their word for stupid. He waded out till the water was over his shoulders, and tried to lift him.

"Don't—don't," said Mark. Bevis began to lean his chest on the water.

"If you're captain," cried Mark, "you ought not to."

"No more I ought," said Bevis, coming back, "Get my bow."

"What for?"

"Go and get my bow."

"I shan't, if you say it like that."

"You shall. Am I not captain?"

Mark was caught by his own argument, and went out on the sward for the bow.

"Tie the arrow on with the string," shouted Bevis. Mark did it, and brought it in, keeping it above the surface. Bevis climbed on the railings, half out of water, so that he could steady himself with his knees against the rail.

"Now, give me the bow," he said. He took good aim, and the nail, filed to a sharp point, was driven deep into the soft deal of the plank. With the string he hauled the catamaran gently back, but it would not come straight; it slipped sideways (like the boomerang in the air), and came ashore under the aspen bough.

When they came out they bathed again in the air and the sunshine; they rolled on the sward, and ran. Bevis, as he ran and shouted, shot off an arrow with all his might to see how far it would go. It went up, up, and curving over, struck a bough at the top of one of the elms, and stopped there by the rooks' nests. Mark shouted and danced on the bird's-foot lotus, and darted his spear, heedless of the bone head. It went up into the hazel boughs of the hedge among the young nuts, and he could not get it till dressed, for the thistles.

They ran again and chased each other in and out the sycamore trunks, and visited the hollow, shouting their loudest, till the distant herd looked up from their grazing. The sun-light poured upon them, and the light air came along; they bathed in air and sunbeam, and gathered years of health like flowers from the field.

Bevis

V

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

A CAMP IN THE DARK

The next day (Tuesday, September 24th), it was two o'clock in the afternoon before I got my journal written up and my knapsack repaired, for I was determined to carry my knapsack in the future and have no more ado with baskets: and half an hour afterwards I set out for Le Cheylard l'Evêque, a place on the borders of the forest of Mercoire. A man, I was told, should walk there in an hour and a half; and I thought it scarce too ambitious to suppose that a man encumbered with a donkey might cover the same distance in four hours.

All the way up the long hill from Langogne it rained and hailed alternately; the wind kept freshening steadily, although slowly; plentiful hurrying clouds—some dragging veils of straight rainshower, others massed and luminous as though promising snow—careered out of the north and followed me along my way. I was soon out of the cultivated basin of the Allier, and away from the ploughing oxen, and such-like sights of the country. Moor, heathery marsh, tracts of rock and pines, woods of birch all jewelled with the autumn yellow, here and there a few naked cottages and bleak fields,—these were the characters of the country. Hill and valley followed valley and hill; the little green and stony cattle-tracks wandered in and out of one another, split into three or four, died away in marshy hollows, and began again sporadically on hillsides or at the borders of a wood.

There was no direct road to Cheylard, and it was no easy affair to make a passage in this uneven country and through this intermittent labyrinth of tracks. It must have been about four when I struck Sagnerousse, and went on my way rejoicing in a sure point of departure. Two hours afterwards, the dusk rapidly falling, in a lull of the wind, I issued from a fir-wood where I had long been wandering, and found, not the looked-for village, but another marsh bottom among rough-and-tumble hills. For some time past I had heard the ringing of cattle-bells ahead; and now, as I came out of the skirts of the wood, I saw near upon a dozen cows and perhaps as many more black

figures, which I conjectured to be children, although the mist had almost unrecognisably exaggerated their forms. These were all silently following each other round and round in a circle, now taking hands, now breaking up with chains and reverences. [A dance of children appeals to very innocent and lively thoughts; but, at nightfall on the marshes, the thing was eerie and fantastic to behold.] Even I, who am well enough read in Herbert Spencer, felt a sort of silence fall for an instant on my mind. The next I was pricking Modestine forward, and guiding her like an unruly ship through the open. In a path, she went doggedly ahead of her own accord, as before a fair wind; but once on the turf or among heather, and the brute became demented. The tendency of lost travellers to go round in a circle was developed in her to the degree of passion, and it took all the steering I had in me to keep even a decently straight course through a single field.

While I was thus desperately tacking through the bog, children and cattle began to disperse, until only a pair of girls remained behind. From these I sought direction on my path. The peasantry in general were but little disposed to counsel a wayfarer. One old devil simply retired into his house, and barricaded the door on my approach; and I might beat and shout myself hoarse, he turned a deaf ear. Another, having given me a direction which, as I found afterwards, I had misunderstood, complacently watched me going wrong without adding a sign. He did not care a stalk of parsley if I wandered all night upon the hills! As for these two girls, they were a pair of impudent sly sluts, with not a thought but mischief. One put out her tongue at me, the other bade me follow the cows, and they both giggled and jogged each other's elbows. The Beast of Gévaudan ate about a hundred children of this district; I began to think of him with sympathy.

Leaving the girls, I pushed on through the bog, and got into another wood and upon a well-marked road. It grew darker and darker. Modestine, suddenly beginning to smell mischief, bettered the pace of her own accord, and from that time forward gave me no trouble. It was the first sign of intelligence I had occasion to remark in her. At the same time, the wind freshened into half a gale, and another heavy discharge of rain came flying up out of the north. At the other side of the wood I sighted some red windows in the dusk. This was the hamlet

of Fouzilhic ; three houses on a hillside, near a wood of birches. Here I found a delightful old man, who came a little way with me in the rain to put me safely on the road for Cheylard. He would hear of no reward, but shook his hands above his head almost as if in menace, and refused volubly and shrilly, in unmitigated *patois*.

All seemed right at last. My thoughts began to turn upon dinner and a fireside, and my heart was agreeably softened in my bosom. Alas, and I was on the brink of new and greater miseries. Suddenly, at a single swoop, the night fell. I have been abroad in many a black night, but never in a blacker. A glimmer of rocks, a glimmer of the track where it was well beaten, a certain fleecy density, or night within night, for a tree,—this was all that I could discriminate. The sky was simply darkness overhead ; even the flying clouds pursued their way invisibly to human eyesight. I could not distinguish my hand at arm's-length from the track, nor my goad, at the same distance, from the meadows or the sky.

Soon the road that I was following split, after the fashion of the country, into three or four in a piece of rocky meadow. Since Modestine had shown such a fancy for beaten roads, I tried her instinct in this predicament. But the instinct of an ass is what might be expected from the name ; in half a minute she was clambering round and round among some boulders, as lost a donkey as you would wish to see. I should have camped long before had I been properly provided ; but as this was to be so short a stage, I had brought no wine, no bread for myself, and little over a pound for my lady friend. Add to this, that I and Modestine were both handsomely wetted by the showers. But now, if I could have found some water, I should have camped at once in spite of all. Water, however, being entirely absent, except in the form of rain, I determined to return to Fouzilhic, and ask a guide a little farther on my way—"a little farther lend thy guiding hand."

The thing was easy to decide, hard to accomplish. In this sensible roaring blackness I was sure of nothing but the direction of the wind. To this I set my face. The road had disappeared, and I went across country, now in marshy opens, now baffled by walls unscalable to Modestine, until I came once more in sight of some red windows. This time they were differently disposed. It was not Fouzilhic, but Fouzilnac,

arranged

a hamlet little distant from the other in space, but worlds away in the spirit of its inhabitants. I tied Modestine to a gate, and groped forward, stumbling among rocks, plunging mid-leg in bog, until I gained the entrance of the village. In the first lighted house there was a woman who would not open to me. She could do nothing, she cried to me through the door, being alone and lame ; but if I would apply at the next house, there was a man who could help me if he had a mind.

They came to the next door in force, a man, two women, and a girl, and brought a pair of lanterns to examine the wayfarer. The man was not ill-looking, but had a shifty smile. He leaned against the doorpost, and heard me state my case. All I asked was a guide as far as Cheylard.

"*C'est que, voyez-vous, il fait noir,*" said he.

I told him that was just my reason for requiring help.

"I understand that," said he, looking uncomfortable ; "*mais—c'est—de la peine.*"

I was willing to pay, I said. He shook his head. I rose as high as ten francs ; but he continued to shake his head.

"Name your own price, then," said I.

"*Ce n'est pas ça,*" he said at length, and with evident difficulty ; "but I am not going to cross the door—*mais je ne sortirai pas de la porte.*"

I grew a little warm, and asked him what he proposed that I should do.

"Where are you going beyond Cheylard ?" he asked by way of answer.

"That is no affair of yours," I returned, for I was not going to indulge his bestial curiosity ; "it changes nothing in my present predicament."

"*C'est vrai, ça,*" he acknowledged, with a laugh ; "*oui, c'est vrai. Et d'où venez-vous ?*"

A better man than I might have felt nettled.

"Oh," said I, "I am not going to answer any of your questions, so you may spare yourself the trouble of putting them. I am late enough already ; I want help. If you will not guide me yourself, at least help me to find someone else who will."

"Hold on," he cried suddenly. "Was it not you who passed in the meadow while it was still day ?"

"Yes, yes," said the girl, whom I had not hitherto recognised; "it was monsieur; I told him to follow the cow."

"As for you, *mademoiselle*," said I, "you are a *farceuse*."

"And," added the man, "what the devil have you done to be still here?"

What the devil, indeed! But there I was.

"The great thing," said I, "is to make an end of it"; and once more proposed that he should help me to find a guide.

"*C'est que*," he said again, "*c'est que—il fait noir*."

"Very well," said I; "take one of your lanterns."

"No," he cried, drawing a thought backward, and again intrenching himself behind one of his former phrases; "I will not cross the door."

I looked at him. I saw unaffected terror struggling on his face with unaffected shame; he was smiling pitifully and wetting his lip with his tongue, like a detected schoolboy. I drew a brief picture of my state, and asked him what I was to do.

"I don't know," he said; "I will not cross the door."

Here was the Beast of Gévaudan, and no mistake.

"Sir," said I, with my most commanding manners, "you are a coward."

And with that I turned my back upon the family party, who hastened to retire within their fortifications; and the famous door was closed again, but not till I had overheard the sound of laughter. *Filia barbara pater barbarior*. Let me say it in the plural: the Beasts of Gévaudan.

The lanterns had somewhat dazzled me, and I ploughed distressfully among stones and rubbish-heaps. All the other houses in the village were both dark and silent; and though I knocked at here and there a door, my knocking was unanswered. It was a bad business; I gave up Fouzilhac with my curses. The rain had stopped, and the wind, which still kept rising, began to dry my coat and trousers. "Very well," thought I, "water or no water, I must camp." But the first thing was to return to Modestine. I am pretty sure I was twenty minutes groping for my lady in the dark; and if it had not been for the unkindly services of the bog, into which I once more stumbled, I might have still been groping for her at the dawn. My next business was to gain the shelter of a wood, for the wind was cold as well

as boisterous. How, in this well-wooded district, I should have been so long in finding one, is another of the insoluble mysteries of this day's adventures; but I will take my oath that I put near an hour to the discovery.

At last black trees began to show upon my left, and, suddenly crossing the road, made a cave of unmitigated blackness right in front. I call it a cave without exaggeration; to pass below that arch of leaves was like entering a dungeon. I felt about until my hand encountered a stout branch, and to this I tied Modestine, a haggard, drenched, desponding donkey. Then I lowered my pack, laid it along the wall on the margin of the road, and unbuckled the straps. I knew well enough where the lantern was; but where were the candles? I groped and groped among the tumbled articles, and, while I was thus groping, suddenly I touched the spirit-lamp. Salvation! This would serve my turn as well. The wind roared unwearyingly among the trees; I could hear the boughs tossing and the leaves churning through half a mile of forest; yet the scene of my encampment was not only as black as the pit, but admirably sheltered. At the second match the wick caught flame. The light was both livid and shifting; but it cut me off from the universe, and doubled the darkness of the surrounding night.

I tied Modestine more conveniently for herself, and broke up half the black bread for her supper, reserving the other half against the morning. Then I gathered what I should want within reach, took off my wet boots and gaiters, which I wrapped in my waterproof, arranged my knapsack for a pillow under the flap of my sleeping-bag, insinuated my limbs into the interior, and buckled myself in like a *bambino*. I opened a tin of Bologna sausage and broke a cake of chocolate, and that was all I had to eat. It may sound offensive, but I ate them together, bite by bite, by way of bread and meat. All I had to wash down this revolting mixture was neat brandy: a revolting beverage in itself. But I was rare and hungry; ate well, and smoked one of the best cigarettes in my experience. Then I put a stone in my straw hat, pulled the flap of my fur cap over my neck and eyes, put my revolver ready to my hand, and snuggled well down among the sheepskins.

I questioned at first if I were sleepy, for I felt my heart beating faster than usual, as if with an agreeable excitement to which my mind remained stranger. But as soon as my eye-lids

touched, that subtle glue leaped between them, and they would no more come separate. The wind among the trees was my lullaby. Sometimes it sounded for minutes together with a steady, even rush, not rising nor abating; and again it would swell and burst like a great crashing breaker, and the trees would patter me all over with big drops from the rain of the afternoon. Night after night, in my own bedroom in the country, I have given ear to this perturbing concert of the wind among the woods; but whether it was a difference in the trees, or the lie of the ground, or because I was myself outside and in the midst of it, the fact remains that the wind sang to a different tune among these woods of Gévaudan. I hearkened and hearkened: and meanwhile sleep took gradual possession of my body and subdued my thoughts and senses; but still my last waking effort was to listen and distinguish, and my last conscious state was one of wonder at the foreign clamour in my ears.

Twice in the course of the dark hours—once when a stone galled me underneath the sack, and again when the poor patient Modestine, growing angry, pawed and stamped upon the road—I was recalled for a brief while to consciousness, and saw a star or two overhead, and the lace-like edge of the foliage against the sky. When I awoke for the third time (Wednesday, September 25th), the world was flooded with a blue light, the mother of the dawn. I saw the leaves labouring in the wind and the ribbon of the road; and, on turning my head, there was Modestine tied to a beech, and standing half across the path in an attitude of inimitable patience. I closed my eyes again, and set to thinking over the experience of the night. I was surprised to find how easy and pleasant it had been, even in this tempestuous weather. The stone which annoyed me would not have been there, had I not been forced to camp blindfold in the opaque night; and I had felt no other inconvenience, except when my feet encountered the lantern or the second volume of Peyrat's *Pastors of the Desert* among the mixed contents of my sleeping-bag; nay, more, I had felt not a touch of cold, and awakened with unusually lightsome and clear sensations.

With that, I shook myself, got once more into my boots and gaiters, and, breaking up the rest of the bread for Modestine, strolled about to see in what part of the world I had awakened. Ulysses, left on Ithaca, and with a mind unsettled by the goddess, was not more pleasantly astray. I have been after an

adventure all my life, a pure dispassionate adventure, such as befell early and heroic voyagers : and thus to be found by morning in a random woodside nook in Gévaudan—not knowing north from south, as strange to my surroundings as the first man upon the earth, an inland castaway—~~was~~ to find a fraction of my day-dreams realised. I was on the skirts of a little wood of birch, sprinkled with a few beeches ; behind, it adjoined another wood of fir ; and in front, it broke up and went down in open order into a shallow and meadowy dale. All round there were bare hilltops, some near, some far away, as the perspective closed or opened, but none apparently much higher than the rest. The wind huddled the trees. The golden specks of autumn in the birches tossed shiveringly. Overhead the sky was full of strings and shreds of vapour, flying, vanishing, reappearing, and turning about an axis like tumblers, as the wind hounded them through heaven. It was wild weather and famishing cold. I ate some chocolate, swallowed a mouthful of brandy, and smoked a cigarette before the cold should have time to disable my fingers. And by the time I had got all this done, and had made my pack and bound it on the pack-saddle, the day was tiptoe on the threshold of the east. We had not gone many steps along the lane, before the sun, still invisible to me, sent a glow of gold over some cloud mountains that lay ranged along the eastern sky.

The wind had us on the stern, and hurried us bitingly forward. I buttoned myself into my coat, and walked on in a pleasant frame of mind with all men, when suddenly, at a corner, there was Fouzilhic once more in front of me. Not only that, but there was the old gentleman who had escorted me so far the night before, running out of his house at sight of me, with hands upraised in horror.

"My poor boy !" he cried, "what does this mean ?"

I told him what had happened. He beat his old hands like clappers in a mill, to think how lightly he had let me go ; but when he heard of the man of Fouzilhic, anger and depression seized upon his mind.

"This time, at least," said he, "there shall be no mistake."

And he limped along, for he was very rheumatic, for about half a mile, and until I was almost within sight of Cheylard, the destination I had hunted for so long.

Travels with a Donkey

VI

JOHN TYNDALL

AN ASCENT OF MONTE ROSA

The foregoing good day's work was rewarded by a sound sleep at night. The tourists were called in succession next morning, but after each call I instantly subsided into deep slumber, and thus healthily spaced out the interval of darkness. Day at length dawned and gradually brightened. I looked at my watch and found it twenty minutes to six. My guide had been lent to a party of gentlemen who had started at three o'clock for the summit of Monte Rosa, and he had left with me a porter who undertook to conduct me to one of the adjacent glaciers. But as I looked from my window the unspeakable beauty of the morning filled me with a longing to see the world from the top of Monte Rosa. I was in exceedingly good condition—could I not reach the summit alone? Trained and indurated as I had been, I felt that the thing was possible; at all events I could try, without attempting anything which was not clearly within my power.

Whether my exercise be mental or bodily, I am always most vigorous when cool. During my student life in Germany, the friends who visited me always complained of the low temperature of my room, and here among the Alps it was no uncommon thing for me to wander over the glaciers from morning till evening in my shirt-sleeves. My object now was to go as light as possible, and hence I left my coat and neckcloth behind me, trusting to the sun and my own motion to make good the calorific waste. After breakfast I poured what remained of my tea into a small glass bottle, an ordinary demi-bouteille, in fact; the waiter then provided me with a ham sandwich, and, with my scrip thus frugally furnished, I thought the heights of Monte Rosa might be won. I had neither brandy nor wine, but I knew the immense amount of mechanical force represented by four ounces of bread and ham, and I therefore feared no failure from lack of nutriment. Indeed, I am inclined to think that both guides and travellers often impair their vigour and render themselves cowardly and apathetic by the incessant "refreshing" which they deem it necessary to indulge in on such occasions.

The guide whom Lauener intended for me was at the door; I passed him and desired him to follow me. This he at first refused to do, as he did not recognise me in my shirt-sleeves; but his companions set him right, and he ran after me. I transferred my scrip to his shoulders, and led the way upward. Once or twice he insinuated that that was not the way to the Schwarz-See, and was probably perplexed by my inattention. From the summit of the ridge which bounds the Görner Glacier the whole grand panorama revealed itself, and on the higher slopes of Monte Rosa—so high, indeed, as to put all hope of overtaking them, or even coming near them, out of the question—a row of black dots revealed the company which had started at three o'clock from the hotel. They had made remarkably good use of their time, and I was afterwards informed that the cause of this was the intense cold, which compelled them to keep up the proper supply of heat by increased exertion. I descended swiftly to the glacier, and made for the base of Monte Rosa, my guide following at some distance behind me. One of the streams, produced by superficial melting, had cut for itself a deep wide channel in the ice; it was not too wide for a spring, and with the aid of a run I cleared it and went on. Some minutes afterwards I could hear the voice of my companion exclaiming, in a tone of expostulation, "No, no, I won't follow you there." He, however, made a circuit, and crossed the stream; I waited for him at the place where the Monte Rosa Glacier joins the rock, "*auf der Platte*," and helped him down the ice-slope. At the summit of these rocks I again waited for him. He approached me with some excitement of manner, and said that it now appeared plain to him that I intended to ascend Monte Rosa, but that he would not go with me. I asked him to accompany me to the summit of the next cliff, which he agreed to do; and I found him of some service to me. He discovered the faint traces of the party in advance, and, from his greater experience, could keep them better in view than I could. We lost them, however, near the base of the cliff at which we aimed, and I went on, choosing as nearly as I could remember the route followed by Lauener and myself a week previously, while my guide took another route, seeking for the traces. The glacier here is crevassed, and I was among the fissures some distance in advance of my companion. Fear was manifestly getting the better of him, and he finally stood still, exclaiming, "No man

divided

gain an

can pass there." At the same moment I discovered the trace, and drew his attention to it; he approached me submissively, said that I was quite right, and declared his willingness to go on. We climbed the cliff, and discovered the trace in the snow above it. Here I transferred the scrip and telescope to my own shoulders, and gave my companion a cheque for five francs. He returned, and I went on alone.

The sun and heaven were glorious, but the cold was nevertheless intense, for it had frozen bitterly the night before. The mountain seemed more noble and lovely than when I had last ascended it; and as I climbed the slopes, crossed the shining cols, and rounded the vast snow-bosses of the mountain, the sense of being alone lent a new interest to the glorious scene. I followed the track of those who preceded me, which was that pursued by Lauener and myself a week previously. Once I deviated from it to obtain a glimpse of Italy over the saddle which stretches from Monte Rosa to the Lyskamm. Deep below me was the valley, with its huge and dislocated névé, and the slope on which I hung was just sufficiently steep to keep the attention aroused without creating anxiety. I prefer such a slope to one on which the thought of danger cannot be entertained. I become more weary upon a dead level, or in walking up such a valley as that which stretches between Visp and Zermatt, than on a steep mountain side. The sense of weariness is often no index to the expenditure of muscular force: the muscles may be charged with force, and, if the nervous excitant be feeble, the strength lies dormant, and we are tired without exertion. But the thought of peril keeps the mind awake, and spurs the muscles into action; they move with alacrity and freedom, and the time passes swiftly and pleasantly.

Occupied with my own thoughts as I ascended, I sometimes unconsciously went too quickly, and felt the effects of the exertion. I then slackened my pace, allowing each limb an instant of repose as I drew it out of the snow, and found that in this way walking became rest. This is an illustration of the principle which runs throughout nature—to accomplish physical changes, time is necessary. Different positions of the limb require different molecular arrangements; and to pass from one to the other requires time. By lifting the leg slowly and allowing it to fall forward by its own gravity, a man may get on steadily for several hours,

while a very slight addition to this pace may speedily exhaust him. Of course the normal pace differs in different persons, but in all the power of endurance may be vastly augmented by the prudent outlay of muscular force.

The sun had long shone down upon me with intense fervour, but I now noticed a strange modification of the light upon the slopes of snow. I looked upwards, and saw a most gorgeous exhibition of interference-colours. A light veil of clouds had drawn itself between me and the sun, and this was flooded with the most brilliant dyes. Orange, red, green, blue—all the hues produced by diffraction were exhibited in the utmost splendour. There seemed a tendency to form circular zones of colour round the sun, but the clouds were not sufficiently uniform to permit of this, and they were consequently broken into spaces, each steeped with the colour due to the condition of the cloud at the place. Three times during my ascent similar veils drew themselves across the sun, and at each passage the splendid phenomena were renewed. As I reached the middle of the mountain an avalanche was let loose from the sides of the Lyskamm; the thunder drew my eyes to the place; I saw the ice move, but it was only the tail of the avalanche; still the volume of sound told me that it was a huge one. Suddenly the front of it appeared from behind a projecting rock, hurling its ice-masses with fury into the valley, and tossing its rounded clouds of ice-dust high into the atmosphere. A wild long-drawn sound, multiplied by echoes, now descended from the heights above me. It struck me at first as a note of lamentation, and I thought that possibly one of the party which was now near the summit had gone over the precipice. On listening more attentively I found that the sound shaped itself into an English "Hurrah!" I was evidently nearing the party, and on looking upwards I could see them, but still at an immense height above me. The summit still rose before them, and I therefore thought the cheer premature. A precipice of ice was now in front of me, around which I wound to the right, and in a few minutes found myself fairly at the bottom of the Kamm.

I paused here for a moment, and reflected on the work before me. My head was clear, my muscles in perfect condition, and I felt just sufficient fear to render me careful. I faced the Kamm, and went up slowly but surely, and soon heard the cheer which announced the arrival of the party at the summit of the mountain.

It was a wild, weird, intermittent sound, swelling or falling as the echoes reinforced or enfeebled it. In getting through the rocks which protrude from the snow at the base of the last spur of the mountain, I once had occasion to stoop my head, and, on suddenly raising it, my eyes swam as they rested on the unbroken slope of snow at my left. The sensation was akin to giddiness, but I believe it was chiefly due to the absence of any object upon the snow upon which I could converge the axes of my eyes. Up to this point I had eaten nothing. I now unloosed my scrip, and had two mouthfuls of sandwich and nearly the whole of the tea that remained. I found here that my load, light as it was, impeded me. When fine balancing is necessary, the presence of a very light load, to which one is unaccustomed, may introduce an element of danger, and for this reason I here left the residue of my tea and sandwich behind me. A long, long edge was now in front of me, sloping steeply upwards. As I commenced the ascent of this, the foremost of those whose cheer had reached me from the summit some time previously, appeared upon the top of the edge, and the whole party was seen immediately afterwards dangling on the Kamm. We mutually approached each other. Peter Bohren, a well-known Oberland guide, came first, and after him came the gentleman in his immediate charge. Then came other guides with other gentlemen, and last of all my guide, Lauener, with his strong right arm round the youngest of the party. We met where a rock protruded through the snow. The cold smote my naked throat bitterly, so to protect it I borrowed a handkerchief from Lauener, bade my new acquaintances good-bye, and proceeded upwards. I was soon at the place where the snow-ridge joins the rocks which constitute the crest of the mountain: through these my way lay, every step I took augmenting my distance from all life, and increasing my sense of solitude. I went up and down the cliffs as before, round ledges, through fissures, along edges of rock, over the last deep and rugged indentation, and up the rocks at its opposite side, to the summit.

A world of clouds and mountains lay beneath me. Switzerland, with its pomp of summits, was clear and grand; Italy was also grand, but more than half obscured. Dark cumulus and dark crag vied in savagery, while at other places white snows and white clouds held equal rivalry. The scooped valleys of Monte Rosa itself were magnificent, all gleaming in the bright sunlight—tossed and torn at intervals, and sending from their

rents and walls the magical blue of the ice. Ponderous *névés* lay upon the mountains, apparently motionless, but suggesting motion—sluggish, but indicating irresistible dynamic energy, which moved them slowly to their doom in the warmer valleys below. I thought of my position: it was the first time that a man had stood alone upon that wild peak, and were the imagination let loose amid surrounding agencies, and permitted to dwell upon the perils which separated the climber from his kind, I dare say curious feelings might have been engendered. But I was prompt to quell all thoughts which might lessen my strength, or interfere with the calm application of it. Once indeed an accident made me shudder. While taking the cork from a bottle which is deposited on the top, and which contains the names of those who have ascended the mountain, my axe slipped out of my hand, and slid some thirty feet away from me. The thought of losing it made my flesh creep, for without it descent would be utterly impossible. I regained it, and looked upon it with an affection which might be bestowed upon a living thing, for it was literally my staff of life under the circumstances. One look more over the cloud-capped mountains of Italy, and I then turned my back upon them, and commenced the descent.

The brown crags seemed to look at me with a kind of friendly recognition, and, with a surer and firmer feeling than I possessed on ascending, I swung myself from crag to crag and from ledge to ledge with a velocity which surprised myself. I reached the summit of the Kamm, and saw the party which I had passed an hour and a half before, emerging from one of the hollows of the mountain; they had escaped from the edge which now lay between them and me. The thought of the possible loss of my axe at the summit was here forcibly revived, for without it I dared not take a single step. My first care was to anchor it firmly in the snow, so as to enable it to bear at times nearly the whole weight of my body. In some places, however, the anchor had but a loose hold: the "cornice" to which I have already referred became granular, and the handle of the axe went through it up to the head, still, however remaining loose. Some amount of trust had thus to be withdrawn from the staff and placed in the limbs. A curious mixture of carelessness and anxiety fills the mind on such occasions. I often caught myself humming a verse

that anchor'd deep in the snow

of a frivolous song, but this was mechanical, and the substratum of a man's feelings under such circumstances is real earnestness. The precipice to my left was a continual preacher of caution, and the slope to my right was hardly less impressive. I looked down the former but rarely, and sometimes descended for a considerable time without looking beyond my own footsteps. The power of a thought was illustrated on one of these occasions. I had descended with extreme slowness and caution for some time, when looking over the edge of the cornice I saw a row of pointed rocks at some distance below me. These I felt must receive me if I slipped over, and I thought how before reaching them I might so break my fall as to arrive at them unkilld. This thought enabled me to double my speed, and as long as the spiky barrier ran parallel to my track I held my staff in one hand, and contented myself with a slight pressure upon it.

I came at length to a place where the edge was solid ice, which rose to the level of the cornice, the latter appearing as if merely stuck against it. A groove ran between the ice and snow, and along this groove I marched until the cornice became unsafe, and I had to betake myself to the ice. The place was really perilous, but, encouraging myself by the reflection that it would not last long, I carefully and deliberately hewed steps, causing them to dip a little inward, so as to afford a purchase for the heel of my boot, never forsaking one till the next was ready, and never wielding my hatchet until my balance was secured. I was soon at the bottom of the Kamm, fairly out of danger, and, full of glad vigour, I bore swiftly down upon the party in advance of me. It was an easy task to me to fuse myself amongst them as if I had been an old acquaintance, and we joyfully slid, galloped, and rolled together down the residue of the mountain.

The only exception was the young gentleman in Lauener's care. A day or two previously he had, I believe, injured himself in crossing the Gemmi, and long before he reached the summit of Monte Rosa his knee swelled, and he walked with great difficulty. But he persisted in ascending, and Lauener, seeing his great courage, thought it a pity to leave him behind. I have stated that a portion of the Kamm was solid ice. On descending this, Mr. F.'s footing gave way, and he slipped forward. Lauener was forced to accompany him, for the place was too steep and slippery to permit of their motion being

checked. Both were on the point of going over the Lyskamm side of the mountain, where they would have indubitably been dashed to pieces. "There was no escape there," said Lauener, in describing the incident to me subsequently, "but I saw a possible rescue at the other side, so I sprang to the right, forcibly swinging my companion round; but in doing so, the baton tripped me up; we both fell, and rolled rapidly over each other down the incline. I knew that some precipices were in advance of us, over which we should have gone, so, releasing myself from my companion, I threw myself in front of him, stopped myself with my axe, and thus placed a barrier before him." After some vain efforts at sliding down the slopes on a baton, in which practice I was fairly beaten by some of my new friends, I attached myself to the invalid, and walked with him and Lauener homewards. Had I gone forward with the foremost of the party, I should have completed the expedition to the summit and back in a little better than nine hours.

I think it right to say one earnest word in connection with this ascent; and the more so as I believe a notion is growing prevalent that half what is said and written about the dangers of the Alps is mere humbug. No doubt exaggeration is not rare, but I would emphatically warn my readers against acting upon the supposition that it is general. The dangers of Mont Blanc, Monte Rosa, and other mountains, are real, and, if not properly provided against, may be terrible. I have been much accustomed to be alone upon the glaciers, but sometimes, even when a guide was in front of me, I have felt an extreme longing to have a second one behind me. Less than two good ones I think an arduous climber ought not to have; and if climbing without guides were to become habitual, deplorable consequences would assuredly sooner or later ensue.

Glaciers of the Alps

VII

MARK TWAIN

A SLEEPLESS NIGHT

walk As we tramped gaily out at the gate of the town, we overtook a peasant's cart, partly laden with odds and ends of cabbages and similar vegetable rubbish, and drawn by a small cow and a smaller donkey yoked together. It was a pretty slow concern,

business

but it got us into Heilbronn before dark—five miles, or possibly it was seven.

We stopped at the very same inn which the famous old robber knight and rough fighter, Götz von Berlichingen, abode in after he got out of captivity in the Square Town of Heilbronn between three hundred and fifty and four hundred years ago. Harris and I occupied the same room which he had occupied, and the same paper had not all peeled off the walls yet. The furniture was quaint old carved stuff, full four hundred years old, and some of the smells were over a thousand. There was a hook in the wall, which the landlord said the terrific old Götz used to hang his iron hand on when he took it off to go to bed. This room was very large—it might be called immense—and it was on the first floor; which means it was on the second story, for in Europe the houses are so high they do not count the first story, else they would get tired climbing before they got to the top. The wall paper was a fiery red, with huge gold figures in it, well smirched by time, and it covered all the doors. These doors fitted so snugly and continued the figures of the paper so unbrokenly that when they were closed one had to go feeling and searching along the wall to find them. There was a stove in the corner—one of those tall, square, stately white porcelain things that looks like a monument, and keeps you thinking of death when you ought to be enjoying your travels. The windows looked out on a little alley, and over that into a stable and some poultry and pig yards in the rear of some tenement houses. There were the customary two beds in the room, one in one end of it, the other in the other, about an old-fashioned brass-mounted single-barrelled pistol-shot apart. They were fully as narrow as the usual German bed, too, and had the German bed's ineradicable habit of spilling the blankets on the floor every time you forgot yourself and went to sleep.

A round table as large as King Arthur's stood in the centre of the room; while the waiters were getting ready to serve our dinner on it we all went out to see the renowned clock on the front of the municipal buildings.

[The *Rathhaus*, or municipal building, is of the quaintest and most picturesque Middle-Age architecture. It has a massive portico and steps before it, heavily balustraded, and adorned with life-size rusty iron knights in complete armour. The clock-face on the front of the building is very large, and of

curious pattern. Ordinarily a gilded angel strikes the hour on a big bell with a hammer ; as the striking ceases, a life-size figure of Time raises its hour-glass and turns it ; two golden rams advance and butt each other ; a gilded cock lifts its wings ; but the main features are two great angels, who stand on each side of the dial with long horns at their lips : it was said that they blew melodious blasts on these horns every hour ; but they did not do it for us. We were told later that they blew only at night when town was still.]

* * * * *

When we got back to the hotel I wound and set the pedometer and put it in my pocket, for I was to carry it next day and keep record of the miles we made. The work which we had given the instrument to do during the day which had just closed, had not fatigued it perceptibly.

We were in bed by ten, for we wanted to be up and away on our tramp homeward with the dawn. I hung fire, but Harris went to sleep at once. I hate a man who goes to sleep at once ; there is a sort of indefinable something about it which is not exactly an insult, and yet is an insolence ; and one which is hard to bear, too. I lay there fretting over this injury, and trying to go to sleep ; but the harder I tried the wider awake I grew. I got to feeling very lonely in the dark, with no company but an undigested dinner. My mind got a start by-and-by, and began to consider the beginning of every subject which has ever been thought of ; but it never went further than the beginning ; it was touch and go ; it fled from topic to topic with a frantic speed. At the end of an hour my head was in a perfect whirl, and I was dead tired, fagged out.

The fatigue was so great that it presently began to make some head against the nervous excitement ; while imagining myself wide awake, I would really doze into momentary unconsciousnesses, and come suddenly out of them with a physical jerk which nearly wrenched my joints apart—the delusion of the instant being that I was tumbling backwards over a precipice. After I had fallen over eight or nine precipices and thus found out that one half of my brain had been asleep eight or nine times without the wide-awake, hard-working other half suspecting it, the periodical unconsciousnesses began to extend their spell gradually over more of my brain-territory, and at last I sank into a drowse which grew deeper and deeper

dead sleep
dead shut - a fine
dead as a

and was doubtless just on the very point of becoming a solid, blessed, dreamless stupor, when—what was that?

My dulled faculties dragged themselves partly back to life, and took a receptive attitude. Now out of an immense, a limitless distance, came a something which grew and grew, and approached, and presently was recognisable as a sound—it had rather seemed to be a feeling, before. This sound was a mile away, now—perhaps it was the murmur of a storm; and now it was nearer—not a quarter of a mile away; was it the muffled rasping and grinding of distant machinery? No, it came still nearer; was it the measured tramp of a marching troop? But it came nearer still, and still nearer—and at last it was right in the room: it was merely a mouse gnawing the woodwork. So I had held my breath all that time for such a trifle.

Well, what was done could not be helped; I would go to sleep at once and make up the lost time. That was a thoughtless thought. Without intending it—hardly knowing it—I fell to listening intently to that sound, and even unconsciously counting the strokes of the mouse's nutmeg-grater. Presently I was deriving exquisite suffering from this employment, yet may be I could have endured it if the mouse had attended steadily to his work; but he did not do that; he stopped every now and then, and I suffered more while waiting and listening for him to begin again than I did while he was gnawing. Along at first I was mentally offering a reward of five,—six,—seven,—ten dollars for that mouse; but towards the last I was offering rewards which were entirely beyond my means. I closereefed my ears,—that is to say, I bent the flaps of them down, and furled them into five or six folds, and pressed them against the hearing-orifice,—but it did no good; the faculty was so sharpened by nervous excitement that it was become a microphone, and could hear through the overlays without trouble.

My anger grew to a frenzy. I finally did what all persons before me have done, clear back to Adam—resolved to throw something. I reached down and got my walking-shoes, then sat up in bed and listened, in order to exactly locate the noise. But I couldn't do it; it was as unlocatable as a cricket's noise; and where one thinks that that is, is always the very place where it isn't. So I presently hurled a shoe at random, and with a vicious vigour. It struck the wall over Harris's head

and fell down on him; I had not imagined I could throw so far. It woke Harris, and I was glad of it until I found he was not angry; then I was sorry. He soon went to sleep again, which pleased me; but straightway the mouse began again, which roused my temper once more. I did not want to wake Harris a second time, but the gnawing continued until I was compelled to throw the other shoe. This time I broke a mirror—there were two in the room—I got the largest one of course. Harris woke again, but did not complain, and I was sorrier than ever. I resolved that I would suffer all possible torture before I would disturb him a third time.

The mouse eventually retired, and by-and-by I was sinking to sleep, when a clock began to strike; I counted till it was done, and was about to drowse again when another clock began; I counted; then the two great Rathhaus clock angels began to send forth soft, rich, melodious blasts from their long trumpets. I had never heard anything that was so lovely, or weird, or mysterious—but when they got to blowing the quarter-hours, they seemed to me to be overdoing the thing. Every time I dropped off for a moment, a new noise woke me. Each time I woke, I missed my coverlet, and had to reach down to the floor and get it again.

At last all sleepiness forsook me. I recognised the fact that I was hopelessly and permanently wide awake. Wide awake, and feverish and thirsty. When I had lain tossing there as long as I could endure it, it occurred to me that it would be a good idea to dress and go out in the great square and take a refreshing wash in the fountain, and smoke and reflect there until the remnant of the night was gone.

I believed I could dress in the dark without waking Harris. I had banished my shoes after the mouse, but my slippers would do for a summer night. So I rose softly, and gradually got on everything—down to one sock. I couldn't seem to get on the track of that sock, any way I could fix it. But I had to have it; so I went down on my hands and knees with one slipper on and the other in my hand, and began to paw gently around and rake the floor, but with no success. I enlarged my circle, and went on pawing and raking. With every pressure of my knee, how the floor creaked! and every time I chanced to rake against any article, it seemed to give out thirty-five or thirty-six times more noise than it would have done in the day

time. In those cases I always stopped and held my breath till I was sure Harris had not awakened—then I crept along again. I moved on and on, but I could not find the sock ; I could not seem to find anything but furniture. I could not remember that there was much furniture in the room when I went to bed, but the place was alive with it now—especially chairs—chairs everywhere—had a couple of families moved in, in the meantime? And I never could seem to *glance* on one of those chairs, but always struck it full and square with my head. My temper rose, by steady and sure degrees, and as I pawed on and on, I fell to making vicious comments under my breath.

Finally, with a venomous access of irritation, I said I would leave without the sock ; so I rose up and made straight for the door—as I supposed—and suddenly confronted my dim spectral image in the unbroken mirror. It startled the breath out of me, for an instant ; it also showed me that I was lost, and had no sort of idea where I was. When I realised this, I was so angry that I had to sit down on the floor and take hold of something to keep from lifting the roof off with an explosion of opinion. If there had been only one mirror, it might possibly have helped to locate me ; but there were two, and two were as bad as a thousand ; besides, these were on opposite sides of the room. I could see the dim blur of the windows, but in my turned-around condition they were exactly where they ought not to be, and so they only confused me instead of helping me.

I started to get up, and knocked down an umbrella ; it made a noise like a pistol-shot when it struck that hard, slick carpetless floor ; I grated my teeth, and held my breath—Harris did not stir. I set the umbrella slowly and carefully on end against the wall, but as soon as I took my hand away, its heel slipped from under it, and down it came again with another bang. I shrunk together and listened a moment in silent fury—no harm done, everything quiet. With the most painstaking care and nicety I stood the umbrella up once more, took my hand away, and down it came again.

I have been strictly reared, but if it had not been so dark and solemn and awful there in that lonely vast room, I do believe I should have said something then which could not be put into a Sunday-school book without injuring the sale of it. If my reasoning powers had not been already sapped dry by my harassments, I would have known better than to try to set an

umbrella on end on one of those glassy German floors in the dark; it can't be done in the daytime without four failures to one success. I had one comfort, though—Harris was yet still and silent—he had not stirred.

The umbrella could not locate me—there were four standing around the room, and all alike. I thought I would feel along the wall and find the door in that way. I rose up and began this operation, but raked down a picture. It was not a large one, but it made noise enough for a panorama. Harris gave out no sound, but I felt that if I experimented any further with the pictures I should be sure to wake him. Better give up trying to get out. Yes, I would find King Arthur's Round Table once more—I had already found it several times—and use it for a base of departure on an exploring tour for my bed; if I could find my bed I could then find my water pitcher; I would quench my raging thirst and turn in. So I started on my hands and knees, because I could go faster that way, and with more confidence, too, and not knock down things. By-and-by I found the table—with my head—rubbed the bruise a little, then rose up and started, with hands abroad and fingers spread, to balance myself. I found a chair; then the wall; then another chair; then a sofa; then an alpenstock, then another sofa; this confounded me, for I had thought there was only one sofa. I hunted up the table again and took a fresh start; found some more chairs.

It occurred to me, now, as it ought to have done before, that as the table was round, it was therefore of no value as a base to aim from; so I moved off once more, and at random among the wilderness of chairs and sofas—wandered off into unfamiliar regions, and presently knocked a candlestick off a mantelpiece; grabbed at the candlestick and knocked off a lamp; grabbed at the lamp and knocked off a water-pitcher with a rattling crash, and thought to myself, "I've found you at last—I judged I was close upon you." Harris shouted "murder," and "thieves," and finished with "I'm absolutely drowned."

The crash had roused the house. Mr X. pranced in in his long night garment with a candle, young Z. after him with another candle; a procession swept in at another door with candles and lanterns, landlord and two German guests in their nightgowns, and a chambermaid in hers.

I looked around; I was at Harris's bed, a Sabbath day's

journey from my home. There was only one sofa, it was against the wall; there was only one chair where a body could get at it—I had been revolving around it like a planet, and colliding with it like a comet half the night.

I explained how I had been employing myself, and why. Then the landlord's party left, and the rest of us set about our preparations for breakfast, for the dawn was ready to break. I glanced furtively at my pedometer, and found I had made forty-seven miles. But I did not care, for I had come out for a pedestrian tour anyway.

A Tramp Abroad

VIII

JOSEPH CONRAD

YOUTH

"The old bark lumbered on, heavy with her age and the burden of her cargo, while I lived the life of youth in ignorance and hope. She lumbered on through an interminable procession of days; and the fresh gilding flashed back at the setting sun, seemed to cry out over the darkening sea the words painted on her stern, 'JUDEA, London. Do or Die.'"

"Then we entered the Indian Ocean and steered northerly for Java Head. The winds were light. Weeks slipped by. She crawled on, 'do or die,' and people at home began to think of posting us as overdue.

"One Saturday evening, I being off duty, the men asked me to give them an extra bucket of water or so—for washing clothes. As I did not wish to screw on the fresh water pump so late, I went forward whistling, and with a key in my hand to unlock the forepeak scuttle, intending to serve the water out of a spare tank we kept there.

"The smell down below was as unexpected as it was frightful. One would have thought hundreds of paraffin lamps had been flaring and smoking in that hole for days. I was glad to get out. The man with me coughed and said, 'Funny smell, sir.' I answered negligently, 'It's good for the health they say,' and walked aft.

"The first thing I did was to put my head down the square of the midship ventilator. As I lifted the lid a visible breath,

something like a thin fog, a puff of faint haze, rose from the opening. The ascending air was hot, and had a heavy, sooty, paraffiny smell. I gave one sniff, and put down the lid gently. It was no use choking myself. The cargo was on fire.

"Next day she began to smoke in earnest. You see it was to be expected, for though the coal was of a safe kind, that cargo had been so handled, so broken up with handling, that it looked more like smithy coal than anything else. Then it had been wetted—more than once. It rained all the time we were taking it back from the hulk, and now with this long passage it got heated, and there was another case of spontaneous combustion.

"The captain called us into the cabin. He had a chart spread on the table, and looked unhappy. He said, 'The coast of West Australia is near, but I mean to proceed to our destination. It is the hurricane month too; but we will just keep her head for Bankok, and fight the fire. No more putting back anywhere, if we all get roasted. We will try first to stifle this 'ere damned combustion by want of air.'

"We tried. We battened down everything, and still she smoked. The smoke kept coming out through imperceptible crevices; it forced itself through bulkheads and covers; it oozed here and there and everywhere in slender threads, in an invisible film, in an incomprehensible manner. It made its way into the cabin, into the fore-castle; it poisoned the sheltered places on the deck, it could be sniffed as high as the main yard. It was clear that if the smoke came out the air came in. This was disheartening. This combustion refused to be stifled.

"We resolved to try water, and took the hatches off. Enormous volumes of smoke, whitish, yellowish, thick, greasy, misty, choking, ascended as high as the trucks. All hands cleared out aft. Then the poisonous cloud blew away, and we went back to work in a smoke that was no thicker now than that of an ordinary factory chimney.

"We rigged the force pump, got the hose along, and by and by it burst. Well, it was as old as the ship—a prehistoric hose, and past repair. Then we pumped with the feeble head-pump, drew water with buckets, and in this way managed in time to pour lots of Indian Ocean into the main hatch. The bright stream flashed in sunshine, fell into a layer of white crawling smoke, and vanished on the black surface of coal. Steam ascended mingling with the smoke. We poured salt water as

into a barrel without a bottom. It was our fate to pump in that ship, to pump out of her, to pump into her; and after keeping water out of her to save ourselves from being drowned, we frantically poured water into her to save ourselves from being burnt.

"And she crawled on, do or die, in the serene weather. The sky was a miracle of purity, a miracle of azure. The sea was polished, was blue, was pellucid, was sparkling like a precious stone, extending on all sides, all round to the horizon—as if the whole terrestrial globe had been one jewel, one colossal sapphire, a single gem fashioned into a planet. And on the lustre of the great calm waters the JUDEA glided imperceptibly, enveloped in languid and unclean vapours, in a lazy cloud that drifted to leeward, light and slow: a pestiferous cloud defiling the splendour of the sea and sky.

"All this time of course we saw no fire. The cargo smouldered at the bottom somewhere. Once Mahon, as we were working side by side, said to me with a queer smile: 'Now, if she only would spring a tidy leak—like that time when we first left the Channel—it would put a stopper on this fire. Wouldn't it?' I remarked irrelevantly, 'Do you remember the rats?'

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"We tried everything. We even made an attempt to dig down to the fire. No good, of course. No man could remain more than a minute below. Mahon, who went first, fainted there, and the man who went to fetch him out did likewise. We lugged them out on deck. Then I leaped down to show how easily it could be done. They had learned wisdom by that time, and contented themselves by fishing for me with a chain-hook tied to a broom-handle, I believe. I did not offer to go and fetch up my shovel, which was left down below.

"Things began to look bad. We put the long-boat into the water. The second boat was ready to swing out. We had also another, a 14-foot thing, on davits aft, where it was quite safe.

"Then, behold, the smoke suddenly decreased. We redoubled our efforts to flood the bottom of the ship. In two days there was no smoke at all. Everybody was on the broad grin. This was on a Friday. On Saturday no work, but sailing the ship of course, was done. The men washed their clothes and their faces for the first time in a fortnight, and had a special dinner

given them. They spoke of spontaneous combustion with contempt, and implied *they* were the boys to put out combustions. Somehow we all felt as though we each had inherited a large fortune. But a beastly smell of burning hung about the ship. Captain Beard had hollow eyes and sunken cheeks. I had never noticed so much before how twisted and bowed he was. He and Mahon prowled soberly about hatches and ventilators, sniffing. It struck me suddenly poor Mahon was a very, very old chap. As to me, I was as pleased and proud as though I had helped to win a great naval battle. O! Youth!

"The night was fine. In the morning a homeward-bound ship passed us hull down—the first we had seen for months; but we were nearing the land at last, Java Head being about 190 miles off, and nearly due north.

"Next day it was my watch on deck from eight to twelve. At breakfast the captain observed, 'It's wonderful how that smell hangs about the cabin.' About ten, the mate being on the poop, I stepped down on the main deck for a moment. The carpenter's bench stood abaft the main mast: I leaned against it sucking at my pipe, and the carpenter, a young chap, came to talk to me. He remarked, 'I think we have done very well, haven't we?' and then I perceived with annoyance the fool was trying to tilt the bench. I said curtly, 'Don't, Chips,' and immediately became aware of a queer sensation, of an absurd delusion,—I seemed somehow to be in the air. I heard all round me like a pent-up breath released—as if a thousand giants simultaneously had said Phoo!—and felt a dull concussion which made my ribs ache suddenly. No doubt about it—I was in the air and my body was describing a short parabola. But short as it was, I had the time to think several thoughts in, as far as I can remember, the following order: 'This can't be the carpenter—What is it?—Some accident—Submarine volcano? Coals, gas!—By Jove! We are being blown up—Everybody's dead—I am falling into the afterhatch—I see fire in it.'

"The coal dust suspended in the air of the hold had glowed dull red at the moment of the explosion. In the twinkling of an eye, in an infinitesimal fraction of a second since the first tilt of the bench, I was sprawling full length on the cargo. I picked myself up and scrambled out. It was quick like a rebound. The deck was a wilderness of smashed timber, lying

crosswise like trees in a wood after a hurricane; an immense curtain of soiled rags waved gently before me—it was the main sail blown to strips. I thought, 'The masts will be toppling over directly'; and to get out of the way bolted on all fours towards the poop-ladder. The first person I saw was Mahon, with eyes like saucers, his mouth open, and the long white hair standing straight on end round his head like a silver halo. He was just about to go down when the sight of the main deck stirring, heaving up, and changing into splinters before his eyes, petrified him on the top step. I stared at him in unbelief, and he stared at me with a queer kind of shocked curiosity. I did not know that I had no hair, no eyebrows, no eyelashes, that my young moustache was burnt off, that my face was black, one cheek laid open, my nose cut, and my chin bleeding. I had lost my cap, one of my slippers, and my shirt was torn to rags. Of all this I was not aware. I was amazed to see the ship still afloat, the poop deck whole—and, most of all, to see anybody alive. Also the peace of the sky and the serenity of the sea were distinctly surprising. I suppose I expected to see them convulsed with horror.

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"No one was killed or even disabled, but every one was more or less hurt. You should have seen them! Some were in rags, with black faces, like coalheavers, like sweeps, and had bullet heads that seemed closely cropped, but were in fact singed to the skin. Others, of the watch below, awakened by being shot out from their collapsing bunks, shivered incessantly, and kept on groaning even as we went about our work. But they all worked. That crew of Liverpool hard cases had in them the right stuff. It's my experience they always have. It is the sea that gives it—the vastness, the loneliness surrounding their dark stolid souls. Ah! Well! We stumbled, we crept, we fell, we barked our shins on the wreckage, we hauled. The masts stood, but we did not know how much they might be charred down below. It was nearly calm, but a long swell ran from the west and made her roll. They might go at any moment. We looked at them with apprehension. One could not foresee which way they would fall.

"Then we retreated aft and looked about us. The deck was a tangle of planks on edge, of planks on end, of splinters, of

ruined woodwork. The masts rose from that chaos like big trees above a matted undergrowth. The interstices of that mass of wreckage were full of something whitish, sluggish, stirring—of something that was like a greasy fog. The smoke of the invisible fire was coming up again, was trailing, like a poisonous thick mist in some valley choked with dead wood. Already lazy wisps were beginning to curl upwards amongst the mass of splinters. Here and there a piece of timber, stuck upright, resembled a post. Half of a fire-rail had been shot through the foresail, and the sky made a patch of glorious blue in the ignobly soiled canvas. A portion of several boards holding together had fallen across the rail, and one end protruded overboard, like a gangway leading upon nothing, like a gangway leading over the deep sea, leading to death—as if inviting us to walk the plank at once and be done with our ridiculous troubles. And still the air, the sky,—a ghost, something invisible was hailing the ship.

“Some one had the sense to look over, and there was the helmsman, who had impulsively jumped overboard, anxious to come back. He yelled and swam lustily like a merman, keeping up with the ship. We threw him a rope, and presently he stood amongst us streaming with water and very crest-fallen. The captain had surrendered the wheel, and apart, elbow on rail, and chin in hand, gazed at the sea wistfully. We asked ourselves ‘What next?’ I thought, ‘Now, this is something like. This is great. I wonder what will happen.’ O youth!

“Suddenly Mahon sighted a steamer far astern. Captain Beard said: ‘We may do something with her yet.’ We hoisted two flags which said in the international language of the sea, ‘On fire. Want immediate assistance.’ The steamer grew bigger rapidly, and by-and-by spoke with two flags on her foremast, ‘I am coming to your assistance.’

* * * * *

“At noon the steamer began to tow. She went ahead slim and high, and what was left of the JUDEA followed at the end of 70 fathom of tow-rope,—followed her swiftly like a cloud of smoke with mast-heads protruding above. We went aloft to furl the sails. We coughed on the yards, and were careful about the bunts. Do you see the lot of us there, putting a neat furl on the sails of that ship doomed to arrive nowhere? There was not a man who didn’t think that at any moment the masts

would topple over. From aloft we could not see the ship for smoke, and they worked carefully, passing the gaskets with even turns. 'Harbour furl—aloft there'! cried Mahon from below.

"You understand this? I don't think one of those chaps expected to get down in the usual way. When we did I heard them say to each other, 'Well, I thought we would come down overboard, in a lump—sticks and all—blame me if I didn't.' 'That's what I was thinking to myself,' would answer wearily another battered and bandaged scarecrow. And mind, these were men without the drilled-in habit of obedience. To an onlooker they would be a lot of profane scallywags without a redeeming point. What made them do it—what made them obey me, when I, thinking consciously how fine it was, made them drop the bunt of the foresail twice to try and do it better? What? They had no professional reputation—no examples, no praise. It wasn't a sense of duty; they all knew well enough how to shirk, and laze, and dodge— when they had a mind to it—and mostly they had. Was it the two pounds ten a month that sent them there? They didn't think their pay half good enough. No; it was something in them, something inborn, and subtle and everlasting. I don't say positively that the crew of a French or German merchantman wouldn't have done it, but I doubt whether it would have been done in the same way. There was a completeness in it, something solid like a principle and masterful like an instinct—a disclosure of something secret—of that hidden something, that gift of good or evil that makes racial difference, that shapes the fate of nations.

"It was that night at ten that, for the first time since we had been fighting it, we saw the fire. The speed of the towing had fanned the smouldering destruction. A blue gleam appeared forward, shining below the wreck of the deck. It wavered in patches, it seemed to stir and creep like the light of a glowworm. I saw it first, and told Mahon. 'Then the game's up,' he said. 'We had better stop this towing, or she will burst out suddenly fore and aft before we can clear out.' We set up a yell; rang bells to attract their attention; they towed on. At last Mahon and I had to crawl forward and cut the rope with an axe. There was no time to cast off the lashings. Red tongues could be seen licking the wilderness of splinters under our feet as we made our way back to the poop.

"Of course they very soon found out in the steamer that the rope was gone. She gave a loud blast of her whistle, her lights were seen sweeping in a wide circle, she came up ranging close alongside, and stopped. We were all in a tight group on the poop looking at her. Every man had saved a little bundle or a bag. Suddenly a conical flame with a twisted top shot up forward and threw upon the black sea a circle of light, with the two vessels side by side and heaving gently in its centre. Captain Beard had been sitting on the gratings still and mute for hours, but now he rose slowly and advanced in front of us, to the mizzen-shrouds. Captain Nash hailed: 'Come along! Look sharp. I have mail-bags on board. I will take you and your boats to Singapore.'

"'Thank you! no!' said our skipper. 'We must see the last of the ship!'

"'I can't stand by any longer,' shouted the other. 'Mails—you know.'

"'Ay! Ay! We are all right!'

"'Very well! I'll report you in Singapore.....Goodbye!'

"He waved his hand. Our men dropped their bundles quietly. The steamer moved ahead, and passing out of the circle of light, vanished at once from our sight, dazzled by the fire which burned fiercely. And then I knew that I would see the East first as commander of a small boat. I thought it fine; and the fidelity to the old ship was fine. We should see the last of her. Oh the glamour of youth! Oh the fire of it, more dazzling than the flames of the burning ship, throwing a magic light on the wide earth, leaping audaciously to the sky, presently to be quenched by time, more cruel, more pitiless, more bitter than the sea—and like the flames of the burning ship surrounded by an impenetrable night.

* * * * *

"Half an hour passed. Suddenly there was a frightful racket, rattle, clanking of chain, hiss of water, and millions of sparks flew up into the shivering column of smoke that stood leaning slightly above the ship. The cat-heads had burned away, and the two red-hot anchors had gone to the bottom, tearing out after them two hundred fathom of red-hot chain. The ship trembled, the mass of flame swayed as if ready to collapse, and the fore top-gallant-mast fell. It darted down like an arrow

of fire, shot under, and instantly leaping up within an oar's-length of the boats, floated quietly, very black on the luminous sea.

* * * * *

"I walked up to the skipper and shook him by the shoulder. At last he opened his eyes, but did not move. 'Time to leave her, sir,' I said quietly.

"He got up painfully, looked at the flames, at the sea sparkling round the ship, and black, black as ink farther away; he looked at the stars shining dim through a thin veil of smoke in a sky black, black as Erebus.

"'Youngest first,' he said.

"And the ordinary seaman wiping his mouth with the back of his hand, got up, clambered over the taffrail, and vanished. Others followed. One, on the point of going over, stopped short to drain his bottle, and with a great swing of his arm flung it at the fire, 'Take this'! he cried.

"The skipper lingered disconsolately, and we left him to commune alone for awhile with his first command. Then I went up again and brought him away at last. It was time. The ironwork on the poop was hot to the touch.

"Then the painter of the long-boat was cut, and the three boats, tied together, drifted clear of the ship. It was just sixteen hours after the explosion that we abandoned her. Mahon had charge of the second boat, and I had the smallest—the 14-foot thing. The long-boat would have taken the lot of us; but the skipper said we must save as much property as we could—for the underwriters—and so I got my first command. I had two men with me, a bag of biscuits, a few tins of meat, and a breaker of water. I was ordered to keep close to the long-boat, that in case of bad weather we might be taken into her.

"And do you know what I thought. I thought I would part company as soon as I could. I wanted to have my first command all to myself. I wasn't going to sail in a squadron if there were a chance for independent cruising. I would make land by myself. I would beat the other boats. Youth! All youth! The silly, charming, beautiful youth.

"But we did not make a start at once. We must see the last of the ship. And so the boats drifted about that night, heaving and setting on the swell. The men dozed, waked, sighed, groaned. I looked at the burning ship.

✓ "Between the darkness of earth and heaven she was burning fiercely upon a disc of purple sea shot by the blood-red play of gleams; upon a disc of water glittering and sinister. A high, clear flame, an immense and lonely flame ascended from the ocean, and from its summit the black smoke poured continuously at the sky. She burned furiously, mournful and imposing like a funeral pile kindled in the night, surrounded by the sea, watched over by the stars. A magnificent death had come like a grace, like a gift, like a reward to that old ship at the end of her laborious days. The surrender of her weary ghost to the keeping of stars and sea was stirring like the sight of a glorious triumph. The masts fell just before daybreak, and for a moment there was a burst and turmoil of sparks that seemed to fill with flying fire the night patient and watchful, the vast night lying silent upon the sea. At daylight she was only a charred shell, floating still under a cloud of smoke and bearing a glowing mass of coal within.

"Then the oars were got out, and the boats forming in a line moved round her remains as if in procession—the long-boat leading. As we pulled across her stern a slim dart of fire shot out viciously at us, and suddenly she went down, head first in a great hiss of steam. The unconsumed stern was the last to sink; but the paint had gone, had cracked, had peeled off, and there were no letters, there was no word, no stubborn device that was like her soul, to flash at the rising sun her creed and her name.

"We made our way north. A breeze sprang up, and about noon all the boats came together for the last time. I had no mast or sail in mine, but I made a mast out of a spare oar and hoisted a boat awning for a sail, with a boat-hook for a yard. She was certainly over-masted but I had the satisfaction of knowing that with the wind aft I could beat the other two. I had to wait for them. Then we all had a look at the captain's chart, and, after a sociable meal of hard bread and water, got our last instructions. These were simple: steer north, and keep together as much as possible. 'Be careful with that jury-rig, Marlow,' said the captain; and Mahon, as I sailed proudly past his boat, wrinkled his curved nose and hailed, 'You will sail that ship of yours under water, if you don't look out, young fellow.' 'He was a malicious old man—and may the deep sea where he sleeps now rock him gently, rock him tenderly to the end of time!

"Before sunset a thick rain-squall passed over the two boats, which were far astern, and that was the last I saw of them for a time. Next day I sat steering my cockle-shell—my first command—with nothing but water and sky around me. I did sight in the afternoon the upper-sails of a ship far away, but said nothing, and my men did not notice her. You see I was afraid she might be homeward bound, and I had no mind to turn back from the portals of the East. I was steering for Java—another blessed name—like Bankok, you know. I steered many days.

"I need not tell you what it is to be knocking about in an open boat. I remember nights and days of calm when we pulled, we pulled, and the boat seemed to stand still, as if bewitched within the circle of the sea horizon. I remember the heat, the deluge of rain-squalls that kept us baling for dear life (but filled our water-cask) and I remember sixteen hours on end with a mouth dry as a cinder and a steering-oar over the stern to keep my first command head on to a breaking sea. I did not know how good a man I was till then. I remember the drawn faces, the dejected figures of my two men, and I remember my youth and the feeling that will never come back any more—the feeling that I could last for ever, outlast the sea, the earth, and all men; the deceitful feeling that lures us on to joys, to perils, to love, to vain effort—to death; the triumphant conviction of strength, the heat of life in the handful of dust, the glow in the heart that with every year grows dim, grows cold, grows small, and expires—and expires too soon, too soon—before life itself.

"And this is how I see the East. I have seen its secret places and have looked into its very soul; but now I see it always from a small boat, a high outline of mountains, blue and afar in the morning; like faint mist at noon; a jagged wall of purple at sunset. I have the feel of the oar in my hand, the vision of a scorching blue sea in my eyes. And I see a bay, a wide bay, smooth as glass and polished like ice, shimmering in the dark. A red light burns far off upon the gloom of the land, and the night is soft and warm. We drag at the oars with aching arms, and suddenly a puff of wind, a puff faint and tepid and laden with strange odours of blossoms, of aromatic wood, comes out of the still night—the first sight of the East on my face. That I can never forget. It was impalpable and enslaving, like a charm, like a whispered promise of mysterious delight.

Capt. Conrad's Journal

and passed on

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"Before sunset a thick rain-squall passed over the two boats, which were far astern, and that was the last I saw of them for a small time. Next day I sat steering my cockle-shell—my first command—with nothing but water and sky around me. I did sight in the afternoon the upper-sails of a ship far away, but said nothing, and my men did not notice her. You see I was afraid she might be homeward bound, and I had no mind to turn back from the portals of the East. I was steering for Java—another blessed name—like Bankok, you know. I steered many days.

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"We had been pulling this finishing spell for eleven hours. Two pulled and he whose turn it was to rest sat at the tiller. We had made out the red light in that bay and steered for it, guessing it must mark some small coasting port. We passed two vessels, outlandish, and high-sterned, sleeping at anchor, and, approaching the light, now very dim, ran the boat's nose against the end of a jutting wharf. We were blind with fatigue. My men dropped the oars and fell off the thwarts as if dead. I made fast to a pile. A current rippled softly. The scented obscurity of the shore was grouped into vast masses, a density of colossal clumps of vegetation, probably—mute and fantastic shapes. And at their foot the semi-circle of a beach gleamed faintly, like an illusion. There was not a light, not a stir, not a sound. The mysterious East faced me, perfumed like a flower, silent like death, dark like a grave."

* * * * *

Youth

IX

KENNETH GRAHAME

THE BURGLARS

It was much too fine a night to think of going to bed at once, and so, although the witching hour of nine P.M. had struck, Edward and I were still leaning out of the open window in our nightshirts, watching the play of the cedar-branch shadows on the moonlit lawn, and planning schemes of fresh devilry for the sunshiny morrow. From below, strains of the jocund piano declared that the Olympians were enjoying themselves in their listless impotent way; for the new curate had been bidden to dinner that night, and was at the moment unclerically proclaiming to all the world that he feared no foe. His discordant vociferations doubtless started a train of thought in Edward's mind, for he presently remarked, *à propos* of nothing whatever that had been said before, "I believe the new curate's rather gone on Aunt Maria."

I scouted the notion; "Why, she's quite old," I said. (She must have seen some five-and-twenty summers.)

"Of course she is," replied Edward scornfully. "It's not her, it's her money he's after, you bet!"

"Didn't know she had any money," I observed timidly.

"Sure to have," said my brother with confidence. "Heaps and heaps."

Silence ensued, both our minds being busy with the new situation thus presented : mine, in wonderment at this flaw that so often declared itself in enviable natures of fullest endowment, —in a grown-up man and a good cricketer, for instance, even as this curate; Edward's (apparently) in the consideration of how such a state of things, supposing it existed, could be best turned to his own advantage.

"Bobby Ferris told me," began Edward in due course, "that there was a fellow spooning his sister once——"

"What's spooning?" I asked meekly.

"O I dunno," said Edward indifferently. "It's—it's—it's just a thing they do, you know. And he used to carry notes and messages and things between 'em, and he got a shilling almost every time."

"What, from each of 'em?" I innocently inquired.

Edward looked at me with scornful pity. "Girls never have any money," he briefly explained. "But she did his exercises, and got him out of rows, and told stories for him when he needed it—and much better ones than he could have made up for himself. Girls are useful in some ways. So he was living in clover, when unfortunately they went and quarrelled about something."

"Don't see what that's got to do with it," I said.

"Nor don't I," rejoined Edward. "But anyhow the notes and things stopped, and so did the shillings. Bobby was fairly cornered, for he had bought two ferrets on tick, and promised to pay a shilling a week, thinking the shillings were going on for ever, the silly young ass. So when the week was up, and he was being dunned for the shilling, he went off to the fellow and said: 'Your broken-hearted Bella implores you to meet her at sundown. By the hollow oak as of old, be it only for a moment. Do not fail!' He got all that out of some rotten book, of course. The fellow looked puzzled and said:

"'What hollow oak? I don't know any hollow oak.'"

"'Perhaps it was the Royal Oak?'" said Bobby promptly, 'cos he saw he had made a slip, through trusting too much to the rotten book; but this didn't seem to make the fellow any happier."

"Should think not," I said, "the Royal Oak's an awful low sort of pub."

"I know," said Edward. "Well, at last the fellow said, 'I think I know what she means: the hollow tree in your father's paddock. It happens to be an elm, but she wouldn't know the difference. All right: say I'll be there.' Bobby hung about a bit, for he hadn't got his money. 'She was crying awfully,' he said. Then he got his shilling."

"And wasn't the fellow riled," I inquired, "when he got to the place and found nothing?"

"He found Bobby," said Edward indignantly. "Young Ferris was a gentleman, every inch of him. He brought the fellow another message from Bella: 'I dare not leave the house. My cruel parents immure me closely. If you only knew what I suffer. Your broken-hearted Bella.' Out of the same rotten book. This made the fellow a little suspicious, 'cos it was the old Ferrises who had been keen about the thing all through. The fellow, you see, had tin."

"But what's that got to——" I began again.

"O I dunno," said Edward impatiently. "I'm telling you just what Bobby told me. He got suspicious, anyhow, but he couldn't exactly call Bella's brother a liar, so Bobby escaped for the time. But when he was in a hole next week, over a stiff French exercise, and tried the same sort of game on his sister, she was too sharp for him, and he got caught out. Somehow women seem more mistrustful than men. They're so beastly suspicious by nature, you know."

"I know," said I. "But did the two—the fellow and the sister—make it up afterwards?"

"I don't remember about that," replied Edward indifferently; "but Bobby got packed off to school a whole year earlier than his people meant to send him. Which was just what he wanted. So you see it all came right in the end!"

I was trying to puzzle out the moral of this story—it was evidently meant to contain one somewhere—when a flood of golden lamplight mingled with the moon-rays on the lawn, and Aunt Maria and the new curate strolled out on the grass below us, and took the direction of a garden-seat which was backed by a dense laurel shrubbery reaching round in a half-circle to the house. Edward meditated moodily. "If we only knew

what they were talking about," said he, "you'd soon see whether I was right or not. Look here! Let's send the kid down by the porch to reconnoitre!"

"Harold's asleep," I said; "it seems rather a shame——"

"O rot!" said my brother; "he's the youngest, and he's got to do as he's told!"

So the luckless Harold was hauled out of bed and given his sailing-orders. He was naturally rather vexed at being stood up suddenly on the cold floor, and the job had no particular interest for him; but he was both staunch and well disciplined. The means of exit were simple enough. A porch of iron trellis came up to within easy reach of the window, and was habitually used by all three of us, when modestly anxious to avoid public notice. Harold climbed deftly down the porch like a white rat, and his night-gown glimmered a moment on the gravel walk ere he was lost to sight in the darkness of the shrubbery. A brief interval of silence ensued; broken suddenly by a sound of scuffle, and then a shrill long-drawn squeal, as of metallic surfaces in friction. Our scout had fallen into the hands of the enemy!

Indolence alone had made us devolve the task of investigation on our younger brother. Now that danger had declared itself, there was no hesitation. In a second we were down the side of the porch, and crawling Cherokee-wise through the laurels to the back of the garden-seat. Piteous was the sight that greeted us. Aunt Maria was on the seat, in a white evening frock, looking—for an aunt—really quite nice. On the lawn stood an incensed curate, grasping our small brother by a large ear, which—judging from the row he was making—seemed on the point of parting company with the head it completed and adorned. [The gruesome noise he was emitting did not really affect us otherwise than æsthetically.] To one who has tried both, the wail of genuine physical anguish is easily distinguishable from the pumped-up *ad misericordiam* blubber. Harold's could clearly be recognised as belonging to the latter class. "Now you young—" (whelp. I think it was, but Edward stoutly maintains it was devil), said the curate sternly; "tell us what you mean by it!"

"Well leggo of my ear then!" shrilled Harold, "and I'll tell you the solemn truth!"

"Very well," agreed the curate, releasing him, "now go ahead, and don't lie more than you can help."

We abode the promised disclosure without the least misgiving; but even we had hardly given Harold due credit for his fertility of resource and powers of imagination.

"I had just finished saying my prayers," began that young gentleman slowly, "when I happened to look out of the window, and on the lawn I saw a sight which froze the marrow in my veins! A burglar was approaching the house with snake-like tread! He had a scowl and a dark lantern, and he was armed to the teeth!"

We listened with interest. The style, though unlike Harold's native notes, seemed strangely familiar.

"Go on," said the curate grimly.

"Pausing in his stealthy career," continued Harold, "he gave a low whistle. Instantly the signal was responded to, and from the adjacent shadows two more figures glided forth. The miscreants were both armed to the teeth."

"Excellent," said the curate; "proceed."

"The robber chief," pursued Harold, warming to his work, "joined his nefarious comrades, and conversed with them in silent tones. His expression was truly ferocious, and I ought to have said that he was armed to the t——"

"There, never mind his teeth," interrupted the curate rudely; "there's too much jaw about you altogether. Hurry up and have done."

"I was in a frightful funk," continued the narrator, warily guarding his ear with his hand, "but just then the drawing-room window opened, and you and Aunt Maria came out—I mean emerged. The burglars vanished silently into the laurels, with horrid implications!"

The curate looked slightly puzzled. The tale was well sustained, and certainly circumstantial. After all, the boy might really have seen something. How was the poor man to know—though the chaste and lofty diction might have supplied a hint—that the whole yarn was a free adaptation from the last Penny Dreadful lent us by the knife-and-boot boy?

"Why did you not alarm the house?" he asked.

"'Cos I was afraid," said Harold sweetly, "that p'raps they mightn't believe me!"

"But how did you get down here, you naughty little boy?" put in Aunt Maria.

Harold was hard pressed—by his own flesh and blood, too!

At that moment Edward touched me on the shoulder and glided off through the laurels. When some ten yards away he gave a low whistle. I replied with another. The effect was magical. Aunt Maria started up with a shriek. Harold gave one startled glance around, and then fled like a hare, made straight for the back-door, burst in upon the servants at supper, and buried himself in the broad bosom of the cook, his special ally. The curate faced the laurels—hesitatingly. But Aunt Maria flung herself on him. "O Mr. Hodgitts!" I heard her cry, "you are brave! for my sake do not be rash!" He was not rash. When I peeped out a second later, the coast was entirely clear.

By this time there were sounds of a household timidly emerging; and Edward remarked to me that perhaps we had better be off. Retreat was an easy matter. A stunted laurel gave a leg-up on to the garden wall, which led in its turn to the roof of an out-house, up which, at a dubious angle, we could crawl to the window of the box-room. This overland route had been revealed to us one day by the domestic cat, when hard pressed in the course of an otter-hunt, in which the cat—somewhat unwillingly—was filling the title rôle; and it had proved distinctly useful on occasions like the present. We were snug in bed—minus some cuticle from knees and elbows—and Harold, sleepily chewing something sticky, had been carried up in the arms of the friendly cook, ere the clamour of the burglar-hunters had died away.

The curate's undaunted demeanour, as reported by Aunt Maria, was generally supposed to have terrified the burglars into flight, and much kudos accrued to him thereby. Some days later, however, when he had dropped in to afternoon tea, and making a mild curatorial joke about the moral courage required for taking the last piece of bread-and-butter, I felt constrained to remark dreamily, and as it were to the universe at large: "Mr. Hodgitts! you are brave! for my sake, do not be rash!"

Fortunately for me, the vicar also was a caller on that day; and it was always a comparatively easy matter to dodge my long-coated friend in the open.

POETICAL SELECTIONS

X

HAMLET

ACT I. SCENE II. *A room of State in the Castle.*

*Flourish. Enter the KING, QUEEN, HAMLET, POLONIUS,
LAERTES, VOLTIMAND, CORNELIUS,
Lords and Attendants.*

King. Though yet of Hamlet our dear brother's death
The memory be green, and that it us befitted
To bear our hearts in grief and our whole kingdom
To be contracted in one brow of woe,
Yet so far hath discretion fought with nature
That we with wisest sorrow think on him,
Together with remembrance of ourselves. *Wisdom*
Therefore our sometime sister, now our queen,
The imperial jointress to this warlike state,
Have we, as 'twere with a defeated joy,—
With an auspicious and a dropping eye,
With mirth in funeral and with dirge in marriage,
In equal scale weighing delight and dole,—
Taken to wife : nor have we herein barr'd
Your better wisdoms, which have freely gone
With this affair along : for all, our thanks.
Now follows that you know : young Fortinbras,
Holding a weak supposal of our worth,
Or thinking by our late dear brother's death
Our state to be disjoint and out of frame,
Collegued with the dream of his advantage,
He hath not fail'd to pester us with message,
Importing the surrender of those lands
Lost by his father, with all bonds of law,
To our most valiant brother. So much for him
Now for ourself and for this time of meeting :
Thus much the business is : we have here writ
To Norway, uncle of young Fortinbras,—
Who, impotent and bed-rid, scarcely hears
Of this his nephew's purpose,—to suppress
His further gait herein ; in that the levies,
The lists and full proportions, are all made
Out of his subject : and we here dispatch

You, good Cornelius, and you, Voltimand,
 For bearers of this greeting to old Norway,
 Giving to you no further personal power
 To business with the king more than the scope
 Of these delated articles allow.
 Farewell, and let your haste commend your duty.

Cor. } In that and all things will we show our duty.
Vol. }

King. We doubt it nothing : heartily farewell.

[*Exeunt Voltimand and Cornelius.*]

And now, Laertes, what's the news with you ?
 You told us of some suit ; what is't, Laertes ?
 You cannot speak of reason to the Dane,
 And lose your voice : what wouldst thou beg, Laertes,
 That shall not be my offer, not thy asking ?
 The head is not more native to the heart,
 The hand more instrumental to the mouth,
 Than is the throne of Denmark to thy father.
 What wouldst thou have, Laertes ?

Laer. My dread lord,
 Your leave and favour to return to France,
 From whence though willingly I came to Denmark,
 To show my duty in your coronation,
 Yet now, I must confess, that duty done,
 My thoughts and wishes bend again toward France
 And bow them to your gracious leave and pardon.
King. Have you your father's leave ? What says Polonius ?
Pol. He hath, my lord, wrung from me my slow leave
 By laboursome petition, and at last
 Upon his will I seal'd my hard consent :
 I do beseech you, give him leave to go.

King. Take thy fair hour, Laertes ; time be thine,
 And thy best graces spend it at thy will !
 But now, my cousin Hamlet, and my son,—

Ham. [*Aside*] A little more than kin, and less than kind.

King. How is it that the clouds still hang on you ?

Ham. Not so, my lord ; I am too much i' the sun.

Queen. Good Hamlet, cast thy nighted colour off,
 And let thine eye look like a friend on Denmark.
 Do not for ever with thy vailed lids
 Seek for thy noble father in the dust :

Thou know'st 'tis common ; all that lives must die,
Passing through nature to eternity.

Ham. Ay, madam, it is common.

Queen.

If it be,

Why seems it so particular with thee ?

Ham. Seems, madam ! nay, it is ; I know not 'seems.'

'Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,

Nor customary suits of solemn black,

Nor windy suspiration of forced breath,

No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,

Nor the dejected hayiour of the visage,

Together with all forms, modes, shapes of grief,

That can denote me truly : these indeed 'seem' ;

For they are actions that a man might play ;

But I have that within which passeth show ;

These but the trappings and the suits of woe.

King. 'Tis sweet and commendable in your nature, Hamlet,

To give these mourning duties to your father :

But, you must know, your father lost a father ;

That father lost, lost his ; and the survivor bound

In filial obligation for some term

To do obsequious sorrow : but to persevere

In obstinate condolement is a course

Of impious stubbornness ; 'tis unmanly grief ;

It shows a will most incorrect to heaven,

A heart unfortified, a mind impatient,

An understanding simple and unschool'd :

For what we know must be, and is as common

As any the most vulgar thing to sense,

Why should we in our peevish opposition

Take it to heart ? Fie ! 'tis a fault to heaven,

A fault against the dead, a fault to nature,

To reason most absurd, whose common theme

Is death of fathers, and who still hath cried,

From the first corse till he that died to-day,

"This must be so." We pray you, throw to earth

This unprevailing woe, and think of us

As of a father : for let the world take note,

You are the most immediate to our throne ;

And with no less nobility of love

Than that which dearest father bears his son,

Do I impart toward you. For your intent

In going back to school in Wittenberg,
It is most retrograde to our desire ;
And we beseech you, bend you to remain
Here in the cheer and comfort of our eye,
Our chiefest courtier, cousin, and our son.

Queen. Let not thy mother lose her prayers, Hamlet :
I pray thee, stay with us ; go not to Wittenberg.

Ham. I shall in all my best obey you, madam.

King. Why, 'tis a loving and a fair reply :
Be as ourself in Denmark. Madam, come ;
This gentle and unforced accord of Hamlet
Sits smiling to my heart ; in grace whereof,
No jocund health that Denmark drinks to-day,
But the great cannon to the clouds shall tell,
And the king's rouse the heavens shall bruit again,
Re-speaking earthly thunder. Come away.

[*Flourish. Exeunt all but Hamlet.*

Ham. O, that this too too solid flesh would melt,
Thaw and resolve itself into a dew ;
Or that the Everlasting had not fix'd
His canon 'gainst self-slaughter ! O God ! God !
How weary, stale, flat and unprofitable
Seem to me all the uses of this world !
Fie on 't ! ah fie ! 'tis an unweeded garden
That grows to seed ; things rank and gross in nature
Possess it merely. That it should come to this !
But two months dead ! nay, not so much, not two :
So excellent a king ; that was, to this,
Hyperion to a satyr ; so loving to my mother
That he might not beteem the winds of heaven
Visit her face too roughly. Heaven and earth !
Must I remember ? why, she would hang on him,
As if increase of appetite had grown
By what it fed on : and yet, within a month—
Let me not think on't—Frailty, thy name is woman !
[A little month, or ere those shoes were old
With which she follow'd my poor father's body,
Like Niobe, all tears : why she, even she—
O God ! a beast, that wants discourse of reason,
Would have mourn'd longer—married with my uncle,
My father's brother, but no more like my father
Than I to Hercules. Within a month,

Ere yet the salt of most unrighteous tears
 Had left the flushing in her galled eyes,
 She married. O, most wicked speed, to post
 With such dexterity to incestuous sheets !
 It is not nor it cannot come to good ;
 But break, my heart, for I must hold my tongue !

Enter HORATIO, MARCELLUS, and BERNARDO.

Hor. Hail to your lordship !

Ham. I am glad to see you well :

Horatio,—or I do forget myself.

Hor. The same, my lord, and your poor servant ever.

Ham. Sir, my good friend ; I'll change that name with
 you :

And what make you from Wittenberg, Horatio ?

Marcellus ?

Mar. My good lord—

Ham. I am very glad to see you.—[*To Bernardo.*]

Good even, sir.—

But what, in faith, make you from Wittenberg ?

Hor. A truant disposition, good my lord.

Ham. I would not hear your enemy say so,

Nor shall you do mine ear that violence,

To make it truster of your own report

Against yourself : I know you are no truant.

But what is your affair in Elsinore ?

We'll teach you to drink deep ere you depart.

Hor. My lord, I came to see your father's funeral.

Ham. I pray thee, do not mock me, fellow-student ;

I think it was to see my mother's wedding.

Hor. Indeed, my lord, it follow'd hard upon.

Ham. Thrift, thrift, Horatio ! the funeral baked-meats

Did coldly furnish forth the marriage tables.

Would I had met my dearest foe in heaven

Or ever I had seen that day, Horatio !

My father !—methinks I see my father.

Hor. Where, my lord ?

Ham. In my mind's eye, Horatio.

Hor. I saw him once ; he was a goodly king.

Ham. He was a man, take him for all in all,

I shall not look upon his like again.

Hor. My lord, I think I saw him yesternight.

Ham. Saw ? who ?

Hor. My lord, the king your father.

Ham. The king my father !

Hor. Season your admiration for a while

With an attent ear, till I may deliver,

Upon the witness of these gentlemen,

This marvel to you.

Ham. For God's love, let me hear.

Hor. Two nights together had these gentlemen,
Marcellus and Bernardo, on their watch,
In the dead vast and middle of the night,
Been thus encounter'd : a figure like your father,
Armed at point exactly, cap-a-pe,
Appears before them, and with solemn march
Goes slow and stately by them : thrice he walk'd
By their oppress'd and fear-surprised eyes,
Within his truncheon's length ; whilst they, distill'd
Almost to jelly with the act of fear,
Stand dumb and speak not to him. This to me
In dreadful secrecy impart they did ;
And I with them the third night kept the watch ;
Where, as they had deliver'd, both in time,
Form of the thing, each word made true and good,
The apparition comes : I knew your father ;
These hands are not more like.

Ham. But where was this ?

Mar. My lord, upon the platform where we watch'd.

Ham. Did you not speak to it ?

Hor. My lord, I did ;

But answer made it none : yet once methought

It lifted up its head and did address

Itself to motion, like as it would speak ;

But even then the morning cock crew loud,

And at the sound it shrunk in haste away

And vanish'd from our sight.

Ham. 'Tis very strange.

Hor. As I do live, my honour'd lord, 'tis true ;
And we did think it writ down in our duty
To let you know of it.

Ham. Indeed, indeed, sirs, but this troubles me.
Hold you the watch to-night ?

Mar. } We do, my lord.
Ber. }

Ham. Arm'd, say you ?

Mar. } Arm'd, my lord.
Ber. }

Ham. From top to toe ?

Mar. } My lord, from head to foot.
Ber. }

Ham. Then saw you not his face ?

Hor. O, yes, my lord ; he wore his beaver up.

Ham. What, look'd he frowningly ?

Hor. A countenance more in sorrow than in anger.

Ham. Pale or red ?

Hor. Nay, very pale.

Ham. And fix'd his eyes upon you ?

Hor. Most constantly.

Ham. I would I had been there.

Hor. It would have much amazed you.

Ham. Very like, very like. Stay'd it long ?

Hor. While one with moderate haste might tell a hundred.

Mar. } Longer, longer.
Ber. }

Hor. Not when I saw't.

Ham. His beard was grizzled ? no ?

Hor. It was, as I have seen it in his life,
 A sable silver'd.

Ham. I will watch to-night ;
 Perchance 'twill walk again.

Hor. I warrant it will.

Ham. If it assume my noble father's person,
 I'll speak to it, though hell itself should gape
 And bid me hold my peace. I pray you all,
 If you have hitherto conceal'd this sight,
 Let it be tenable in your silence still ;
 And whatsoever else shall hap to-night
 Give it an understanding, but no tongue :
 I will requite your loves. So fare you well :
 Upon the platform, 'twixt eleven and twelve,
 I'll visit you.

All. Our duty to your honour.

Ham. Your loves, as mine to you : farewell.

[*Exeunt all but Hamlet.*]

My father's spirit in arms ! all is not well ;
 I doubt some foul play : would the night were come !
 Till then sit still, my soul : foul deeds will rise,
 Though all the earth o'erwhelm them, to men's eyes. [*Exit.*]

XI

TENNYSON

THE LADY OF SHALOTT

PART III

A bow-shot from her bower-eaves,
 He rode between the barley-sheaves,
 The sun came dazzling thro' the leaves,
 And flamed upon the brazen greaves
 Of bold Sir Lancelot.

A red-cross knight for ever kneel'd
 To a lady in his shield,
 That sparkled on the yellow field,
 Beside remote Shalott.

The gemmy bridle glitter'd free,
 Like to some branch of stars we see
 Hung in the golden Galaxy.
 The bridle bells rang merrily

As he rode down to Camelot :
 And from his blazon'd baldric slung
 A mighty silver bugle hung,
 And as he rode his armour rung,
 Beside remote Shalott.

All in the blue unclouded weather
 Thick-jewell'd shone the saddle-leather,
 The helmet and the helmet-feather
 Burn'd like one burning flame together,

As he rode down to Camelot.
 As often thro' the purple night,
 Below the starry clusters bright,
 Some bearded meteor, trailing light,
 Moves over still Shalott.

His broad clear brow in sunlight glow'd ;
On burnish'd hooves his war-horse trode ;
From underneath his helmet flow'd
His coal-black curls as on he rode,
 As he rode down to Camelot.
From the bank and from the river
He flash'd into the crystal mirror,
"Tirra lirra" by the river
 Sang Sir Lancelot.

She left the web, she left the loom,
She made three paces thro' the room,
She saw the water-lily bloom,
She saw the helmet and the plume,
 She look'd down to Camelot.
Out flew the web and floated wide ;
The mirror crack'd from side to side ;
"The curse is come upon me," cried
 The Lady of Shalott.

XII

ELIZABETH BARRETT BROWNING

A MUSICAL INSTRUMENT

What was he doing, the great god Pan,
 Down in the reeds by the river ?
Spreading ruin and scattering ban,
Splashing and paddling with hoofs of a goat,
And breaking the golden lilies afloat
 With the dragon-fly on the river.

He tore out a reed, the great god Pan,
 From the deep cool bed of the river :
The limpid water turbidly ran,
And the broken lilies a-dying lay,
And the dragon-fly had fled away,
 Ere he brought it out of the river.

High on the shore sate the great god Pan,
 While turbidly flow'd the river ;

And hacked and hewed as a great god can,
With his hard bleak steel at the patient reed,
Till there was not a sign of a leaf indeed
To prove it fresh from the river.

He cut it short, did the great god Pan
(How tall it stood in the river !)
Then drew the pith, like the heart of a man,
Steadily from the outside ring,
And notched the poor dry empty thing
In holes, as he sate by the river.

"This is the way," laughed the great god Pan
(Laughed while he sate by the river),
"The only way, since gods began
To make sweet music, they could succeed."
Then, dropping his mouth to a hole in the reed
He blew in power by the river.

Sweet, sweet, sweet, O Pan !
Piercing sweet by the river !
Blinding sweet, O Great god Pan !
The sun on the hill forgot to die,
And the lilies revived, and the dragon-fly
Came back to dream on the river.

Yet half a beast is the great god Pan,
To laugh as he sits by the river,
Making a poet out of a man :
The true gods sigh for the cost and pain—
For the reed which grows nevermore again
As a reed with the reeds in the river.

XIII

CHARLES KINGSLEY

THE LAST BUCCANEER

Oh England is a pleasant place for them that's rich and high,
But England is a cruel place for such poor folks as I ;
And such a port for mariners I ne'er shall see again
As the pleasant Isle of Avès, beside the Spanish Main.

There were forty craft in Avès that were both swift and stout,
All furnished well with small arms and cannons round about ;
And a thousand men in Avès made laws so fair and free
To choose their valiant captains and obey them loyally.

Thence we sailed against the Spaniard with his hoards of plate
and gold,
Which he wrung with cruel tortures from Indian folk of old ;
Likewise the merchant captains, with hearts as hard as stone,
Who flog men and keel-haul them, and starve them to the bone.

Oh the palms grew high in Avès, and fruits that shone like gold,
And the colibris and parrots they were gorgeous to behold ;
And the negro maids to Avès from bondage fast did flee,
To welcome gallant sailors, a-sweeping in from sea.

O sweet it was in Avès to hear the landward breeze,
A-swing with good tobacco in a net between the trees,
With a negro lass to fan you, while you listened to the roar
Of the breakers on the reef outside, that never touched the
shore.

But Scripture saith, an ending to all fine things must be ;
So the King's ships sailed on Avès, and quite put down were we,
All day we fought like bulldogs, but they burst the booms
at night ;
And I fled in a piragua, sore wounded, from the fight.

Nine days I floated starving, and a negro lass beside,
Till for all I tried to cheer her, the poor young thing she died ;
But as I lay a-gasping, a Bristol sail came by,
And brought me home to England here, to beg until I die.

And now I'm old and going—I'm sure I can't tell where ;
One comfort is, this world's so hard, I can't be worse off there :
If I might but be a sea-dove, I'd fly across the main,
To the pleasant Isle of Avès, to look at it once again.

XIV

COVENTRY PATMORE

THE TOYS

My little Son, who look'd from thoughtful eyes
And moved and spoke in quiet grown-up wise,
Having my law the seventh time disobey'd,
I struck him, and dismiss'd
With hard words and unkiss'd,
His Mother, who was patient, being dead.
Then, fearing lest his grief should hinder sleep,
I visited his bed,
But found him slumbering deep,
With darken'd eyelids, and their lashes yet
From his late sobbing wet.
And I, with moan,
Kissing away his tears, left others of my own ;
For, on a table drawn beside his head,
He had put, within his reach,
A box of counters and a red-vein'd stone,
A piece of glass abraded by the beach
And six or seven shells,
A bottle with bluebells
And two French copper coins, ranged there with careful art,
To comfort his sad heart.
So when that night I pray'd
To God, I wept, and said :
Ah, when at last we lie with trancèd breath,
Not vexing Thee in death,
And thou rememberest of what toys
We made our joys,
How weakly understood,
Thy great commanded good,
Then, fatherly not less
Than I whom thou hast moulded from the clay,
Thou'lt leave Thy wrath, and say,
"I will be sorry for their childishness."

XV

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

REQUIEM

Under the wide and starry sky,
Dig the grave and let me lie,
Glad did I live and gladly die
And I laid me down with a will.

This be the verse you grave for me :
Here he lies where he longed to be ;
Home is the sailor, home from sea,
And the hunter home from the hill.

XVI

AUSTIN DOBSON

THE CARVER AND THE CALIPH

(We lay our story in the East.
Because 'tis Eastern?—not the least.
We place it there because we fear
To bring its parable too near,
And seem to touch with impious hand
Our dear confiding native land.)

Haroun Alraschid, in the days
He went about his vagrant ways,
And prowled at eve for good or bad
In lanes and alleys of Bagdad,
Once found, at edge of the bazaar,
E'en where the poorest workers are,
A carver.

Fair his work and fine,
With mysteries of inlaced design,
And shapes of shut significance
To aught but an anointed glance,
The dreams and visions that grow plain

In darkened chambers of the brain.
And all day busily he wrought
From dawn to eve, but no one bought ;
Save when some Jew, with look askant,
Or keen-eyed Greek from the Levant
Would pause awhile,—depreciate,
Then buy a month's work by the weight,
Bearing it swiftly over seas
To garnish rich men's treasures.

And now, for long none bought at all.
So he lay sullen in his stall.
Him thus withdrawn the Caliph found,
And smote his staff upon the ground.
stuck "Ho, there, within ! Hast wares to sell ?
Or slumber'st, having dined too well ?"

"Dined", quoth the man with sullen eyes,
"How should I dine when no one buys ?"
"Nay," said the other, answering low,
"Nay, I but jested. Is it so ?"

"Take, then, this coin,.....but take beside
A counsel, friend, thou hast not tried.
This craft of thine, the mart to suit,
Is too refined,—remote,—minute ;
These small conceptions can but fail ;
'Twere best to work on larger scale,
And rather choose such themes as wear
More of the earth and less of air,
The fisherman that hauls his net,—
The merchants in the market set,—
The couriers posting in the street,—
The gossips as they pass and greet,—
These,—these are clear to all men's eyes,
Therefore with these they sympathize.
Further (neglect not this advice !)
Be sure to ask three times the price."

gunner
down

The carver sadly shook his head ;
He knew 'twas truth the Caliph said.
From that day forth his work was planned
So that the world might understand.

He carved it deeper, and more plain ;
 He carved it thrice as large again ;
 He sold it, too, for thrice the cost ;
 —Ah, but the artist, that was lost !

XVII

T. E. BROWN

MY GARDEN

A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot !
 Rose plot,
 Fringed pool,
 Fern'd grot—
 The veriest school
 Of peace ; and yet the fool
 Contends that God is not—
 Not God ! in gardens ! When the eve is cool ?
 Nay, but I have a sign ;
 'Tis very sure God walks in mine.

XVIII

C. S. CALVERLEY

SAD MEMORIES

They tell me I am beautiful : they praise my silken hair,
 My little feet that silently slip on from stair to stair :
 They praise my pretty trustful face and innocent gray eye ;
 Fond hands caress me oftentimes, yet would that I might die !

Why was I born to be abhorr'd of man and bird and beast ?
 The bulfinch marks me stealing by, and straight his song hath
 ceased ;
 The shrewmouse eyes me shudderingly, then flees ; and, worse
 than that,
 The housedog he flees after me—why was I born a cat ?

Men prize the heartless hound who quits dry-eyed his native land ;
 Who wags a mercenary tail and licks a tyrant hand.

The leal true cat they prize not, that if e'er compell'd to roam
Still flies, when let out of the bag, precipitately home.

They call me cruel. Do I know if mouse or songbird feels ?
I only know they make me light and salutary meals :
And if, as 'tis my nature to, ere I devour I tease 'em,
Why should a low-bred gardener's boy pursue me with a besom ?

Should china fall or chandeliers, or anything but stocks—
Nay stocks, when they're in flowerpots—the cat expects hard
knocks :

Should ever anything be missed—milk, coals, umbrellas, brandy—
The cat's pitch'd into with a boot or any thing that's handy.

"I remember, I remember," how one night I "fleeted by,"
And gain'd the blessed tiles and gazed into the cold clear sky.
"I remember, I remember, how my little lovers came";
And there, beneath the crescent moon, play'd many a little game.

They fought—by good St. Catharine, 'twas a fearsome sight to see
The coal-black crest, the glowering orbs, of one gigantic He.
Like bow by some tall bowman bent at Hastings or Poitiers,
His huge back curved, till none observed a vestige of his ears :

He stood, an ebon crescent, flouting that ivory moon ;
Then raised the pibroch of his race, the Song without a Tune;
Gleam'd his white teeth, his mammoth tail waved darkly to
and fro,

As with one complex yell he burst, all claws, upon the foe.

It thrills me now, that final Miaow—that weird unearthly din :
Lone maidens heard it far away, and leap'd out of their skin.
A potboy from his den o'erhead peeped with a scared wan face;
Then sent a random brickbat down, which knock'd me into space.

Nine days I fell, or thereabouts: and, had we not nine lives,
I wis I ne'er had seen again thy sausage-shop, St. Ives !
Had I, as some cats have, nine tails, how gladly I would lick
The hand, and person generally, of him who heaved that brick !

For me they fill the milkbowl up, and cull the choice sardine :
But ah ! I nevermore shall be the cat I once have been !
The memories of that fatal night they haunt me even now :
In dreams I see that rampant He, and tremble at that Miaow.

XIX

RUDYARD KIPLING

IF

If you can keep your head when all about you
Are losing theirs and blaming it on you ;
If you can trust yourself when all men doubt you,
But make allowance for their doubting too ;
If you can wait and not be tired by waiting,
Or being lied about, don't deal in lies,
Or being hated, don't give way to hating,
And yet don't look too good, nor talk too wise :
If you can dream—and not make dreams your master ;
If you can think—and not make thoughts your aim ;
If you can meet with Triumph and Disaster
And treat those two impostors just the same ;
If you can bear to hear the truth you've spoken
Twisted by knaves to make a trap for fools,
Or watch the things you gave your life to broken,
And stoop and build 'em up with worn-out-tools :
If you can make one heap of all your winnings
And risk it on one turn of pitch-and-toss
And lose, and start again at your beginnings
And never breathe a word about your loss ;
If you can force your heart and nerve and sinew
To serve your turn long after they are gone,
And so hold on when there is nothing in you
Except the Will which says to them : ' Hold on ! '
If you can talk with crowds and keep your virtue,
Or walk with Kings—nor lose the common touch,
If neither foes nor loving friends can hurt you,
If all men count with you, but none too much ;
If you can fill the unforgiving minute
With sixty seconds' worth of distance run,
Yours is the Earth and everything that's in it,
And—which is more—you'll be a Man, my son !

XX

AUSTIN DOBSON

A BALLADE TO QUEEN ELIZABETH

King Philip had vaunted his claims ;

He had sworn for a year he would sack us ;
With an army of heathenish names

He was coming to fagot and stack us ;
Like the thieves of the sea he would track us ;
And shatter our ships on the main ;

But we had bold Neptune to back us,—
And where are the galleons of Spain ?

His carackes were christened of dames

To the kirtles whereof he would tack us ;
With his saints and his gilded stern-frames,
He had thought like an egg-shell to crack us ;

Now Howard may get to his Flaccus,
And Drake to his Devon again,

And Hawkins bowl rubbers to Bacchus,—
For where are the galleons of Spain ?

Let His Majesty hang to St. James

The axe that he whetted to hack us ;
He must play at some lustier games

Or at sea he can hope to out-thwack us ;
To his mines of Peru he would pack us
To tug at his bullet and chain ;

Alas that his Greatness should lack us !—
But where are the galleons of Spain ?

Envoy

Marye scots
Gloriana !—the Don may attack us
Whenever his stomach be fain ;

He must reach us before he can rack us...
And where are the galleons of Spain ?

XXI

W. B. YEATS

THE FIDDLER OF DOONEY

When I play on my fiddle in Dooney
Folk dance like a wave of the sea ;
My cousin is priest in Kilvarnet,
My brother in Moharabuiee.

I pass'd my brother and cousin :
They read in their books of prayer ;
I read in my book of songs
I bought at the Sligo fair.

When we come at the end of time,
To Peter sitting in state,
He will smile on the three old spirits,
But call me first through the gate ;

For the good are always the merry,
Save by an evil chance ;
And the merry love the fiddle,
And the merry love to dance :

And when the folk there spy me,
They will all come up to me,
With "Here is the fiddler of Dooney !" K
And dance like a wave of the sea.

XXII

RALPH HODGSON

THE BELLS OF HEAVEN

I would ring the bells of Heaven
The wildest peal for years,
If Parson lost his senses
And people came to theirs,
And he and they together
Knelt down with angry prayers

For tamed and shabby tigers
And dancing dogs and bears,
And wretched, blind pit ponies,
And little hunted hares.

XXIII

HILAIRE BELLOC

THE SOUTH COUNTRY

When I am living in the Midlands
That are sodden and unkind,
I light my lamp in the evening:
My work is left behind;
And the great hills in the South Country
Come back into my mind.

The great hills of the South Country
They stand along the sea:
And it's there walking in the high woods
That I could wish to be,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Walking along with me.

The men that live in North England
I saw them for a day:
Their hearts are set upon the waste fells,
Their skies are fast and grey:
From their castle-walls a man may see
The mountains far away.

The men that live in West England
They see the Severn strong,
A-rolling on rough water brown
Light aspen leaves along.
They have the secret of the Rocks,
And the oldest kind of song.

But the men that live in the South Country
Are the kindest and most wise,

They get their laughter from the loud surf,
And the faith in their happy eyes
Comes surely from our Sister the Spring
When over the sea she flies;
The violets suddenly bloom at her feet,
She blesses us with surprise.

I never get between the pines,
But I smell the Sussex air;
Nor I never come on a belt of sand
But my home is there;
And along the sky the line of the Downs
So noble and so bare.

A lost thing could I never find,
Nor a broken thing mend;
And I fear I shall be all alone
When I get towards the end.
Who will there be to comfort me,
Or who will be my friend ?

I will gather and carefully make my friends
Of the men of the Sussex Weald,
They watch the stars from silent folds,
They stiffly plough the field.
By them and the God of the South Country
My poor soul shall be healed.

If I ever become a rich man,
Or if ever I grow to be old,
I will build a house with deep thatch
To shelter me from the cold,
And there shall the Sussex songs be sung
And the story of Sussex told.

I will hold my house in the high wood
Within a walk of the sea,
And the men that were boys when I was a boy
Shall sit and drink with me.

XXIV

W. B. YEATS

THE LAKE ISLE OF INNISFREE

I will arise and go now, and go to Innisfree,
 And a small cabin build there, of clay and wattles made ;
 Nine bean rows will I have there, a hive for the honey bee,
 And live alone in the bee-loud glade.

And I shall have some peace there, for peace comes dropping
 slow,
 Dropping from the veils of the morning to where the cricket
 sings ;
 There midnight's all a glimmer, and noon a purple glow,
 And evening full of the linnet's wings.

I will arise and go now, for always night and day
 I hear lake water lapping with low sounds by the shore;
 While I stand on the roadway, or on the pavements gray,
 I hear it in the deep heart's core.

XXV

GEORGE RUSSELL (A. E.)

FROLIC

The children were shouting together
 And racing along the sands,
 A glimmer of dancing shadows,
 A dovelike flutter of hands.

The stars were shouting in heaven,
 The sun was chasing the moon :
 The game was the same as the children's,
 They danced to the self-same tune.

The whole of the world was merry,
 One joy from the vale to the height,
 Where the blue woods of twilight encircled
 The lovely lawns of the light.

XXVI

RUPERT BROOKE

THE SOLDIER

If I should die, think only this of me :
That there's some corner of a foreign field
That is for ever England. There shall be
In that rich earth a richer dust concealed;
A dust whom England bore, shaped, made aware,
Gave, once, her flowers to love, her ways to roam,
A body of England's, breathing English air,
Washed by the rivers, blest by suns of home.

And think, this heart, all evil shed away,
A pulse in the eternal mind, no less
Gives somewhere back the thoughts by England given;
Her sights and sounds; dreams happy as her day;
And laughter, learnt of friends; and gentleness,
In hearts at peace, under an English heaven.

XXVII

WALTER DE LA MARE

ALL THAT'S PAST

Very old are the woods ;
And the buds that break
Out of the brier's boughs,
When March winds wake,
So old with their beauty are—
Oh, no man knows
Through what wild centuries
Roves back the rose.

Very old are the brooks ;
And the rills that rise
Where snow sleeps cold beneath
The azure skies
Sing such a history
Of come and gone,

Their every drop is as wise
As Solomon.

Very old are we men ;
Our dreams are tales
Told in dim Eden
By Eve's nightingales ;
We wake and whisper awhile,
But, the day gone by,
Silence and sleep like fields
Of amaranth lie.

a flower that never fades

XXVIII

JAMES ELROY FLECKER

WAR SONG OF THE SARACENS *in the East*

We are they who come faster than fate : we are they who ride
early or late :

We storm at your ivory gate : Pale Kings of the Sunset,
beware !

*Silk
under women
with gold*

Not on silk nor in samet we lie, not in curtained solemnity die
Among women who chatter and cry, and children who mumble
a prayer.

March on

But we sleep by the ropes of the camp, and we rise with a
shout, and we tramp

With the sun or the moon for a lamp, and the spray of the
wind in our hair.

Merou in Europe

Balgara

From the lands, where the elephants are, to the forts of Merou
and Balghar,

Our steel we have brought and our star to shine on the ruins
of Rum. *Constantinople*

We have marched from the Indus to Spain, and by God we
will go there again;

We have stood on the shore of the plain where the Waters of
Destiny boom.

A mart of destruction we made at Jalula where men were
afraid,

For death was a difficult trade, and the sword was a broker of
doom ;

And the Spear was a Desert Physician who cured not a few of
ambition,
And drave not a few to perdition with medicine bitter and
strong :
And the shield was a grief to the fool and as bright as a
desolate pool,
And as straight as the rock of Stamboul when their cavalry
thundered along :
For the coward was drowned with the brave when our battle
sheered up like a wave,
And the dead to the desert we gave, and the glory to God in
our song.

XXIX

WILLIAM HENRY DAVIES

A THOUGHT

When I look into a glass,
Myself's my only care ;
But I look into a pool
For all the wonders there.

When I look into a glass,
I see a fool :
But I see a wise man
When I look into a pool.

XXX

WALTER DE LA MARE

✓ THE LISTENERS

"Is there anybody there ?" said the Traveller,
Knocking on the moonlit door ;
And his horse in the silence champed the grasses
Of the forest's ferny floor :
And a bird flew up out of the turret,
Above the Traveller's head :

And he smote upon the door again a second time ;
" Is there anybody there ? " he said.
But no one descended to the Traveller ;
No head from the leaf-fringed sill
Leaned over and looked into his grey eyes,
Where he stood perplexed and still.
But only a host of phantom listeners
That dwelt in the lone house then
Stood listening in the quiet of the moonlight
To that voice from the world of men :
Stood thronging the faint moonbeams on the dark stair,
That goes down to the empty hall,
Harkening in an air stirred and shaken
By the lonely Traveller's call.
And he felt in his heart their strangeness,
Their stillness answering his cry,
While his horse moved, cropping the dark turf,
' Neath the starred and leafy sky ;
For he suddenly smote on the door, even
Louder, and lifted his head :—
" Tell them I came, and no one answered,
That I kept my word," he said.
Never the least stir made the listeners,
Though every word he spake
Fell echoing through the shadowiness of the
still house
From the one man left awake :
Ay, they heard his foot upon the stirrup,
And the sound of iron on stone,
And how the silence surged softly backward,
When the plunging hoofs were gone.

XXXI

J. C. SQUIRE

V

WINTER NIGHTFALL

The old yellow stucco
Of the time of the Regent
Is flaking and peeling:
The rows of square windows

In the straight yellow building
Are empty and still;
And the dusty dark evergreens
Guarding the wicket
Are draped with wet cobwebs,
And above this poor wilderness
Toneless and sombre
Is the flat of the hill.

They said that a colonel
Who long ago died here
Was the last one to live here:
An old retired colonel,
Some Fraser or Murray,
I don't know his name;
Death came here and summoned him,
And the shells of him vanished
Beyond all speculation;
And silence resumed here,
Silence and emptiness,
And nobody came.

Was it wet when he lived here,
Were the skies dun and hurrying,
Was the rain so irresolute ?
Did he watch the night coming,
Did he shiver at nightfall
Before he was dead ?
Did the wind go so creepily,
Chilly and puffing,
With drops of cold rain in it ?
Was the hill's lifted shoulder
So lowering and menacing,
So dark and so dead ?

Did he turn through his doorway
And go to his study,
And light many candles ?
And fold in the shutters;
And heap up the fireplace
To fight off the damps ?
And muse on his boyhood,

And wonder if India
Ever was real ?
And shut out the loneliness
With pig-sticking memoirs
And collections of stamps ?

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Perhaps. But he's gone now,
He and his furniture
Dispersed now for ever;
And the last of his trophies,
Antlers and photographs,
Heaven knows where.
And there's grass in his gateway,
Grass on his footpath,
Grass on his doorstep;
The garden's grown over,
The well-chain is broken.
The windows are bare.

And I leave him behind me,
For the straggling, discoloured
Rags of the daylight,
And hills and stone walls
And a rick long forgotten
Of blackening hay:
The road pale and sticky,
And cart-ruts and nail-marks,
And wind-ruffled puddles,
And the slop of my footsteps
In this desolate country's
Cadaverous clay.

